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ABSTRACT

This volume presents articles and information to support and improve literacy practices in schools, the community, and the workplace. Selected article titles are as follows: "Reaching Learners Where They Are" (Linda Shohet); "The Learners' Wall: Experiences in the Health Care System"; "In-Sites: A Study in Workforce Literacy: Some Preliminary Findings" (Judy Hunter, Sue Folinsbee); "Adult Literacy and Television: Has a Familiar Tool Been Overlooked?"; "Adult Literacy and Television: Some Thoughts" (David Hargreaves); "Using Television/Video for Adult Learning" (Europe Singh); "Repurposing at the Grassroots: Learning Numbers from 'Hockey Night in Canada'" (Mona Arsenault); "The Politics of Literacy Policy" (Linda Shohet); "The Bagel Effect: Power and Control Moving from the Centre"; "An Empathetic Empiricist, a Sensitive Statistician: An Interview with Sir Claus Moser"; "Assembling the Fragments: A Review of Research on Adult Basic Skills" (Greg Brooks, Kerry Giles, John Harman, Sally Kendall, Felicity Rees, Sara Whittaker); and "Women and Literacy: Issues of Race, Class, and Culture." **Other items included are as follows:** an annotated bibliography; profiles of noteworthy materials and activities used in literacy classrooms; a special insert on literacy and the homeless that reports on selected literacy initiatives for homeless people and includes samples of poetry and prose written by homeless individuals; reviews of publications about and for use in

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literacy instruction; and announcements of upcoming conferences and other events relevant to literacy practitioners. (MN)

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Literacy Across the Curriculumedia Focus

Volume 15
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Linda Shohet, Editor

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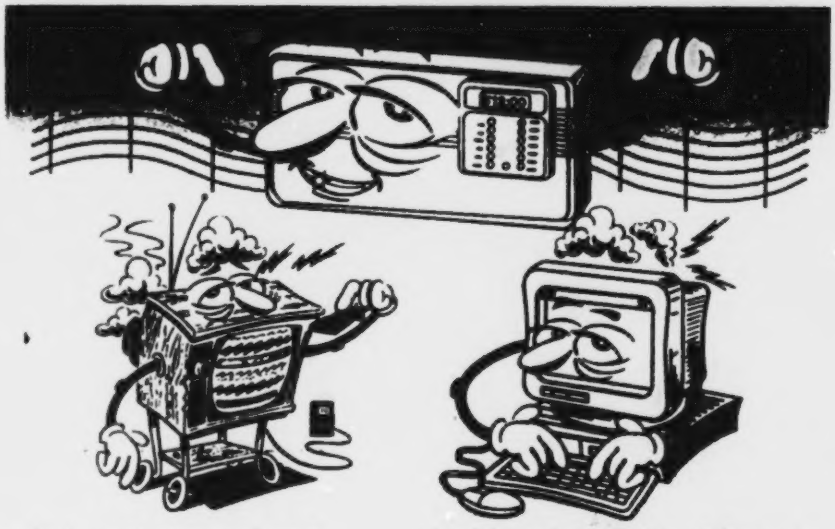
LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUMEDIA FOCUS

Volume 15 • Number 1

Connecting literacy, media and technology in the schools, community and workplace

Reaching learners where they are



Riding the promise of educational technology in general, the literature on adult literacy and television reveals high hopes and investment in the 1960s and the 1970s.

In the early 1960s, television teaching programs were created in the states of Florida and Alabama and tracked for some time; adult educators wrote about the promise of this new technology to reach people where they lived.

Through televised broadcasts, TEVEC in Quebec claimed to have reached thousands of adults with less than grade 9 education in a rural region in the early 1970s. In the mid-1970s, the UK raised the bar, by using TV in a national campaign to motivate people to register in programs and by creating *On the Move*, a BBC series with a storyline that integrated basic skills teaching into the program and offered supporting materials for those who requested them. The demand was overwhelming, beyond the capacity of basic skills providers to respond [see Hargreaves p. 19]. In 1988, TVOntario studied the use of closed-captioned TV for learners who were not hearing impaired but who had other difficulties.

Today, nobody remembers the Florida/Alabama experiment or the Quebec project. There is little talk about closed captioning. The BBC projects, more widely studied, have remained a touchstone in the field. The questions raised by those efforts remain the questions facing anyone contemplating using television for basic skills awareness or provision today.

Today, however, the questions are not asked very often, because by the mid-1980s, most educators had transferred their enthusiasm away from television, which had largely failed to deliver, to the promise of computers, and in the 1990s have extended it to the Internet. In making this shift, we may be overlooking one of the most obvious ways of reaching learners; we are certainly overlooking the fact that every new technology of the twentieth century has failed in its educational promise because it was never critically examined by decision-makers, never fully understood by educators, and never integrated into curriculum or

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THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY • MONTREAL, QUEBEC

teacher training. What might be possible if we took lessons from the past, and reconsidered ways of using technologies that we take for granted?

In Ireland, where a massive national campaign got underway this fall, they have turned back to radio—for both awareness-raising and instruction. The key to using media and technology for adult basic skills means considering the complex ways that people today live with old and new technologies. To reach people where they live, educators have to acknowledge that much, if not most, learning happens outside classrooms, and that there are credible ways of recognizing or accrediting non-traditional learning.

This issue of *LACMF* turns its lens on several areas where non-traditional learning offers possibilities for adult basic skills students in ways that connect directly to their lives. It shares the insights, knowledge and questions of participants at The Centre for Literacy's Summer Institute 2000 which examined adult literacy and television through forty years of experience and a look at the future. Can TV teach? Can it motivate? Can ABE students learn without a teacher? Do teachers understand the potential? What role should volunteers be playing? What is the relationship between print and media literacies? So much knowledge has been shelved or lost. One idea that enthused participants was that of "repurposing." As presented by Europe Singh from the UK's University for Industry (UfI), repurposing is what most teachers have done naturally for years — that is, take excerpts of material from one medium or discipline to use in another context. When used as a formal strategy across merging technologies, Singh suggests, repurposing can give educators access to low-cost, high-quality materials. [See pp. 23]

LACMF also looks at health as a point of engagement in learning, through reports from a national conference on health and literacy, and other sources. What is "health literacy?" Does most of the work in health and literacy emphasize plain language too heavily and overlook the many complexities of health interventions between patient and professional? Do we label and stereotype "low-literate" patients?

Finally, this issue continues to shine a light on community-based writing as it was represented at the 2000 Blue Metropolis Literary Festival in Montreal. Through Grassroots, the community writing strand of the festival, we invited writers from labour groups, from community publishers in the UK, and from a local anti-poverty group to participate — workers, immigrants, and survivors of the mental health system where silence is more common than voice.

The thread among these themes is reaching learners where they are. One teacher at the Summer Institute said, "We always insist that students come over to our side of the street, but sometimes we have to go over to theirs, ...to understand where they are coming from." LS

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUMEDIA FOCUS

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The Centre for Literacy is committed to supporting and improving literacy practices in schools, community and workplace. It is dedicated to increasing public understanding of the changing definition of literacy in a complex society.

Literacy for the 21st century

Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

The Centre for Literacy acknowledges Dawson College and the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, for their support.

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TO PONDER • RECOMMENDED READING

1 On one vision of literacy in the 21st century

Reading Research Quarterly asked several North American reading researchers to envision how literacy will be defined in this century. The excerpt below is an excerpt from Lee Gunderson, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

The 21st century literacy elite will be English-speaking individuals who will find technology to be user friendly. For others, English will continue to be a colonizing language, only at an accelerating rate. The disparity between literacy haves and have-nots will widen in developed countries as literacy becomes more electronic based and limited by income, the language of technology and access. The disparity in access and the range of what constitutes literacy will increase dramatically between developed and developing countries. Technology will drive a change in what constitutes capital, the creation and control of information (Lyotard, 1991). The definition of reading will broaden, and literacy researchers will become embroiled in more complex questions about its definition.

Electronic learning disabilities will be a factor in the increasing diversity as some students find it difficult or impossible to deal with electronic and hypertexts. An increasing number will favor electronic information processing and will be unable to deal with printed texts— they will become print disabled.

Technology such as electronic books, CD-ROMs, and the Internet will exacerbate inequalities and disparities between programs within and between classrooms, schools, districts, municipalities, states and countries. Rather than eliminate literacy problems, technology will create a wider range of them, thereby ensuring that teachers will be required to attempt to solve them, and that they will also be accused of being responsible for them. It will become increasingly difficult to ensure that all students acquire the literacy skills they need to participate in the increasingly competitive information marketplace.

Lee Gunderson, "How will literacy be defined?" *Reading Research Quarterly*, January/February/March 2000, Vol.35, No.1, 69.

2 On "unschooling" as an alternative way of learning

... Samuelson* looked at a group of teenaged girls who call themselves "unschoolers." She initially wanted to investigate the teaching and learning of homeschoolers, but she bumped into this group of unschoolers, some of whom indicated that they had dropped out of homeschool. Their disaffection was tied to their growing perceptions that the curriculum of their homeschools was mainly reproducing the curriculum of formal schooling.

These girls' experiences and beliefs illuminate possibilities for learning beyond school that in part have been made available by new technology. Through Internet and other communicative connections, including online journals and distance learning classes, as well as through learning expeditions to bookstores, libraries, museums, "exploratoriums," movies, and occasional junior college classes, these girls pursued extensive learning agendas that they felt far surpassed a formal high school education.

Many of these youths are finding that they are highly competitive in college testing and for college admissions because their experiences have prepared them to be the independent thinkers and learners that colleges value. Samuelson found that her informants also loved to engage in an ongoing critique of the limits of compulsory schooling. As one of the girls stated," I used to go to school; now I learn." These unschoolers are not just the children of political or religious fringe groups; They also include a growing number of youths who have found a degree of personal power and pleasure in technological alternatives to school-based teaching and learning.

Jabari Mahiri, "Pop culture pedagogy and the end(s) of school," *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 44:4, (December 2000/January 2001), 384.

*In *What they don't learn in school: Literacy in the lives of urban youth*, edited by Jabari Mahiri, New York: Peter Lang (in press).

3 On an encyclopedia returning to print

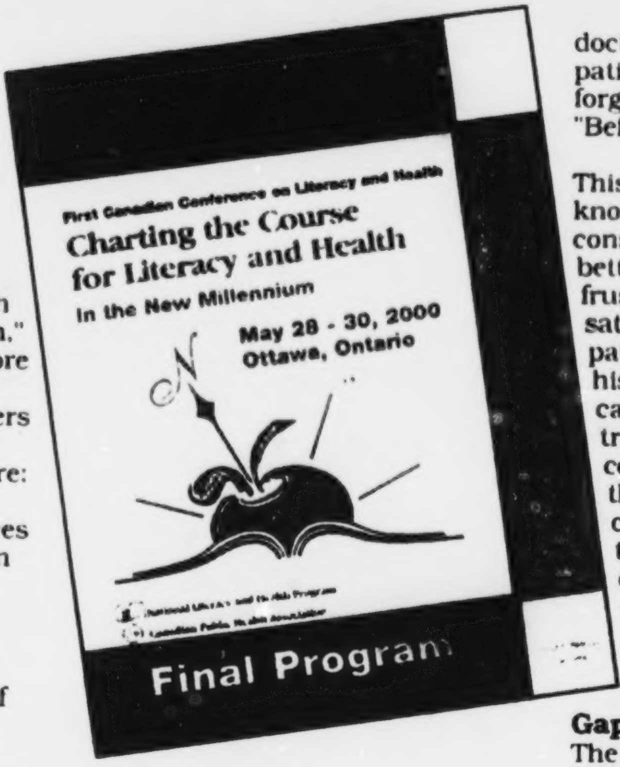
The Canadian Encyclopedia returned to print in 2000 after being available only in CD-ROM format since 1991. George Goodwin, of McClelland and Stewart who published the new one-volume edition of 2640 pages, told Southam News that the move was a response to the fact that about half of Canadian homes still do not have a computer and that for simple fact-finding, turning a page is still easier than searching on disc.

From May 28-30, 2000, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) hosted the First Canadian Conference on Literacy and Health. Entitled "Charting the Course for Literacy and Health in the New Millennium," it brought together more than 300 participants including many pioneers in the field. The five conference themes were:

- Making health services and health information easy to use for all Canadians
- Looking for ways to improve the training of health professionals
- Learning through more research
- Learning from learners
- Building literacy and health partnerships.

Themes 1 and 2 were chaired by Dr. Owen Hughes. Theme 3 was chaired by Dr. Rima Rudd. Themes 4 and 5 were chaired by John Daniel O'Leary, President of Frontier College.

Here are some comments from presentations by Dr. Hughes and Dr. Rudd.



First Canadian Conference on Literacy and Health
Charting the Course for Literacy and Health
In the New Millennium
May 28 - 30, 2000
Ottawa, Ontario

Final Program

On doctors' communication skills

Dr. Hughes, a family doctor in Ottawa and Community Faculty Teacher at the University of Ottawa, who has done research and taught communications for 28 years, addressed the conference first. He is concerned that most doctors still do not get enough training in communication skills in medical school. According to research, Dr. Hughes says, their communication skills actually deteriorate as they progress through medical school. It has been documented that most doctors begin a response to the patient in 19 seconds, forgetting the basic principle, "Before you tell, ask."

This continues despite the knowledge that better consultation skills lead to better health outcomes, less frustration and more satisfaction for providers and patients. Dr. Hughes ended his opening remarks with a call to change medical training. "We need to convince medical schools that effective communication is essential to the practice of health care--it is no longer an option."

On current research in health and literacy – Gaps and Silence

The determinants of health in both the US and Canada are seen to include income and education. Every increase in social position increases the likelihood of good health. Issues such as age, neighbourhood, welfare policies, race/ethnicity, discrimination, gender bias, and income distribution have all been subjects of research in relation to health. However, the research on literacy and health has been narrow in both scope and focus, says Dr. Rima Rudd.

Dr. Rudd, the Director of Educational Programs at the Department of Health and

HEALTH LITERACY PERSPECTIVES

FORMS	SITES
Promotion	Home
Protection	Work
Prevention	Community
Disease Management	Medical facilities
Advocacy	Institutions
	Policy forums

May 2000

Dr. Rima Rudd

Dr. Owen Hughes

Dr. Rima Rudd

Who do patients ask?

In a separate workshop session, Dr. Rudd shared some findings from a research project with adult basic learners in the Boston area. Walking through a hospital with learners, researchers used a talk-aloud protocol to record the strategies the learners used to find their way. Apart from the difficulties posed by many of the signs, the study showed that when they need help, learners asked hospital personnel for information, and frequently chose to ask cleaners or housekeeping staff --- "people who look like us." Dr. Rudd wondered how often hospitals have considered their housekeeping staff as potential "partners" in providing certain types of information to patients.

Social Behaviour, Harvard School of Public Health, is Principal Investigator and Fellow of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. She cites the growing interest in the medical and public health fields of the connections between literacy and health, as evidenced by the surge in journal articles since the 1970's when 11 articles were published in professional journals. In the 1980's, the number rose to 37, while in the past decade, there have been more than 200. However, almost all of the articles start from the finding in national surveys that 47% of North American adults have some difficulty with the printed word.

...the field needs to move beyond plain language and medical encounters to help people become their own advocates and take health action in their communities.

Gaps

The scope of this research has been on the reading level of materials; patient comprehension; the match between patients' abilities and reading materials; the utilization of services; and, in the past three to four years, health outcomes related to literacy levels. The focus, says Dr. Rudd, is equally narrow, looking at comprehension; effective functioning; adherence/compliance; use of available services; and health outcomes. There is a tendency to examine these only in the context of medical encounters, usually without acknowledging the vast array of tasks, besides accessing information, involved in a medical encounter.

Silences

Dr. Rudd points out that we still have little understanding of how literacy influences health action and outcomes. In the US, she notes, many health actions do not involve the written word at all; yet there is almost no research on verbal communication. We do not know how low literacy shows up in oral communication. We also have not explored possible collaboration and more coordinated links between the health and adult education professions.

Expanding the scope

The research agenda should be moving outside the medical community. Dr. Rudd offered a schematic diagram to illustrate the many possible perspectives and sites through which the concept of health literacy could be examined. The permutations and combinations are enormous. [See Health Literacy box, p. 4] Dr. Rudd believes that future research should be examining literacy and participation in health-related decisions and health related action.

Rima Rudd believes that the field needs to move beyond plain language and medical encounters to help people become their own advocates and take health action into their communities.

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Health Canada funds Phase 1 Needs Assessment for Patient Health Literacy Centre at Montreal General Hospital, McGill University Health Centre (MUHC)

Health Canada is funding a Needs Assessment, the first phase in the creation of a Patient Health Literacy Centre at the Montreal General Hospital, McGill University Health Center (MUHC). This initiative was announced by The Centre for Literacy and the Montreal General in 1999 after several years of collaborative staff development and related projects at the hospital. The proposed centre will cater to the information needs of traditionally hard-to-reach groups of patients. These include people with low literacy, with language or cultural barriers, and with learning difficulties due to physical or cognitive disabilities.

According to national studies, up to one third of Canadians have difficulty reading printed material. In the health care sector, throughout the 1990s, with shorter hospitalization and more home-care, there has been increasing reliance on giving patients printed information and instructions to follow. This was part of the rationale for creating a Patient Health Literacy Centre.

The Centre will offer information and support to patients and families through diverse media and non-traditional approaches; it will also offer training and communications support for health care professionals. The site will serve as a testing ground for ideas and strategies that can be fine-tuned and incorporated into a Patient Information Centre to be part of the amalgamated McGill University Health Centre, projected to open in 2004.

Phase 1, to be completed by the end of June 2001, will determine the scope of need in the MUHC population and develop a proposal for a focused pilot-project in the next year.

Information: The Centre for Literacy of Quebec, Tel.: (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415, or visit our web site www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Health and Adult Learning and Literacy

This project will explore the mutual benefits of introducing health topics into ABE, ESL and ASE classes and build a focus of attention within both the health and adult learning communities on the value of cooperation.

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Evolving concept of health literacy–Australia

...Building on this evolving concept, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently defined health literacy more broadly, as follows:

Health literacy represents the cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health.

Health literacy means more than being able to read pamphlets and successfully make appointments. By improving people's access to health information and their capacity to use it effectively, health literacy is critical to empowerment. (WHO, 1998)

This definition significantly broadens the scope of the content of health education, indicates that health literacy may have both personal and social benefits, and has profound implications for education methods.

In terms of content, efforts to improve people's knowledge, understanding, and capacity to act, should not only be directed at changing personal lifestyle or the way in which people use the health services. Health education could also raise awareness of the social, economic and environmental determinants of health, and be directed towards the promotion of individual and collective actions which may lead to modification of these determinants.

In terms of health benefit, such a definition implies that health literacy is a personal resource which leads to personal benefits such as healthier lifestyle choices and effective use of available health services. It also implies that the achievement of higher levels of health literacy among a greater proportion of the population will have social benefits, for example by enabling effective community action for health, and contributing to the development of social capital.

In terms of method of education and communication, such a definition provides a challenge to communicate in ways that invite interaction, participation and critical analysis. This is very similar to the style of education for "critical consciousness" advocated and popularised by the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire (1970).

Don Nutbeam, Literacies Across the Lifespan: Health Literacy, *Literacy & Numeracy Studies*, Vol. 9 No 2 1999, p.49

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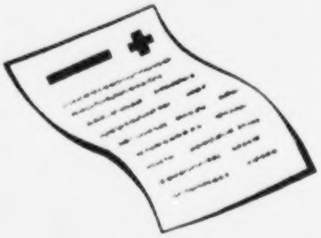
The Learners' Wall

Experiences in the Health Care System

Before the May 2000 Conference on Literacy and Health, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) invited learners to share stories of their communication experiences in the health care system. During the three days of the conference, the submissions were displayed on one wall of the Display Hall where student participants could add to the collection. The types of story are not new: they have been included in countless studies conducted over the past twelve years.

They reinforce Rima Rudd's contention that the focus of health and literacy research has been very narrow. Still, seeing so many of them at one time, and hearing the same stories after so many years, drove home the fact that little change has actually occurred in terms of awareness and communication in the health care sector. The selections are typical of the stories on the wall.

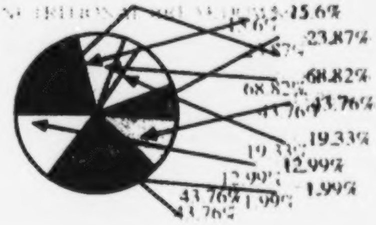


- I have always asked health professionals to write down what my problem is, so that I can bring the paper to my **sister. She has always** explained things to me, and I trust her.

- Mr. Carson called his doctor at the hospital for a refill of his heart pills. The doctor was away and Dr. David H. Frankel, who didn't know Mr. Carson took the call. Dr. Frankel asked Mr. Carson the name of the drug he was taking. Mr. Carson didn't know. Dr. Frankel suggested several drug prescriptions, but Mr. Carson couldn't remember.

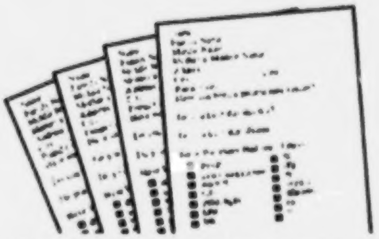
  Dr. Frankel asked Mr. Carson to read him the label of his medicine bottle. Mr. Carson couldn't pronounce it, so began to spell it out, letter by letter.

  The word appeared on his notepad: TABLETS.



- A dietitian talked to me about my diet but then gave me all kinds of written material in small print and in charts that made no sense to me.

  How can I take responsibility for my health if I can't read the information I get, and it is too much to remember?



- The first thing that comes to mind when you talk about the health care system is all the forms you have to fill out. When you're in a waiting room full of people, it's embarrassing to say that you have a problem with reading and writing.

  There are thousands of adults like me who don't want people to know. They won't go to see a doctor or a specialist, and even have a hard time going to pick up prescriptions because of the paper work that comes along with it.

- A lot of times I thought, my God, am I signing my life away?

- They (health providers) shouldn't assume people can fill out these forms. They should automatically say "We have some forms we have to fill out, can I ask you a few questions?" and fill the forms out themselves.

- Once, before an operation I was asked to fill out forms. One question asked about allergies. Well, I'm allergic to Demerol, but I didn't know how to write it, so I left it blank. After surgery they gave me Demerol and I threw up.

- Many times you don't understand what health people tell you, and you're petrified so don't ask questions. A lot of times you'll just stay at home with that ache or pain just because you're embarrassed to go to a doctor.

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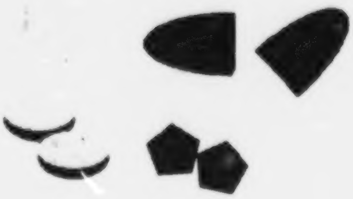
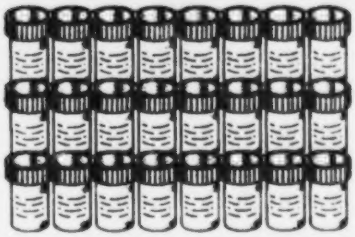


- I can't pronounce the names of my pills - I ask for them by their shape, size and color.

- When I had Strep throat I was given Tylenol with codeine. I couldn't read the information sheet that explained the side effects. The pain eased off, but I thought I was having a bad reaction, so I had to call the hospital to have the side effects explained.



- I am a mother and I have 5 children. When my children are sick I take them to see a doctor and the doctor recommends medicine. I buy the medicines and use them. When my children are fine I put the medicine in the cabinet.

  When my children have the same problem later, I don't have a clue which medicine to use for them because I can't read them and because the label doesn't have a picture to help me or to give me a clue.

  I throw the medicine in the garbage, but if I know how to read the label, or the label has a clue picture, I won't have to throw away the medicine.

  I hope that the health care system will put a picture on the label to give clues - especially for people like me who cannot read. This will be a big help for me and my family.

- When I go to the doctor's I don't explain things very well, even problems I have had for a long time.

  When I get the medicine I always phone my ex-husband and he explains it to me. I don't want to ask my ex-husband, but I am a woman who has big problems reading and writing.

  Sometimes this problem makes me more sick.

- The writing on the medicine bottles is usually too small to be able to read easily.

- When I'm sick I go to a Chinese family doctor because we speak the same language. Sometimes the doctor has to send me to see a specialist. Most specialists speak English, and I have problems explaining how I feel to them. I also have a hard time understanding what they say - especially the names of body parts and sicknesses I never heard before.

  When I go to see a specialist or go to the hospital, I have to bring a friend with me. I need someone to fill in the forms and translate for me. It is difficult to always find a friend to come with me when I need one.

  I hope I can solve these problems sooner or later.

- When I had a problem with my leg, I went to the hospital 6 times. For the first time, I think that I didn't understand what they said was the problem with my leg. After that, I went again to the special hospital to check my blood and take X-rays.

  After, I got some tablets, but on the tablets it just said my name. I didn't know how I can use these tablets because I didn't know how to read, but I had friends who read for me. I took my friends with me to the hospital to explain what they said to me. But they didn't explain to my friend. In that way, they didn't help me, but now I am OK.

In-Sites: A study in workforce literacy
Some preliminary findings

by Judy Hunter and
Sue Folinsbee

In-Sites is the first large-scale Canadian ethnographic research project to study literacy and literacy learning at work. This two-and-a-half year project, supported by a grant from the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, is housed at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto. This article provides some background on the In-Sites Project and reports on some very preliminary findings

Workforce literacy as a complex social practice

The name 'In-Sites' is a pun of course, because ethnographic research seeks understanding and insights into social practices. This project then, is different from research work aimed at mapping individual skills or understanding workforce literacy as a skill issue. We want to consider workforce literacy as a complex social practice. For us, literacy as a social practice refers to how and why people do or do not engage in literacy activities as part of social roles, relationships and power dynamics in the workplace. Skills and tasks are part of, not separate from, the social processes in which they occur. Our intention is to provide a more complex, integrated framework for thinking about workplace literacy by focusing a finely grained analysis on the lived experience of literacy within the social context at the workplace.

Researchers and research sites

Research is taking place at four work sites in manufacturing, grocery production, hospitality and textile industries. The inter-related studies of these different sites will bridge practitioners' work and theories of literacy and learning, and current understandings of the changing nature of work. The team consists of three practicing workplace educators and two academics. The field studies at work sites started in the fall of 1999. At the point of writing, we have finished six months of data collection and will spend the next year analyzing the data and writing and putting together a book.

Problems with incorporating literate tasks at work are not always, or only, about skill deficits.

Emerging theory and research

Emerging theory and research support the idea of examining workforce literacy as a complex social practice. Theorists and researchers from industrialized countries (Castleton, 1999; Holland et al., 1998; Hull, 1997; and Darrah, 1997) argue that the dominant discourse around literacy and work attributes literacy problems to individual worker deficits in the face of rising workplace demands. However, more and more observers see shortcomings with this common approach. Problems with incorporating literate tasks at work are not always, or only, about skill deficits. So, how else can these problems be understood, or remedied?

Preliminary findings

In our research, we've found large amounts of print and graphic information to be an integral part of current Canadian working life; in fact we could characterize all our sites as increasingly document-driven environments. Many forms of "reading and writing" occur in these workplaces, and that leads us to use the term 'literacies' in the plural, to reflect the multiple ways of dealing with information. But increasingly, these multiple forms of literate practice are prescribed and regulated in detail, as part of print-driven quality control and production management systems. Working together on the preliminary analysis of our data, we've been able to refine our questions and themes, focusing on what we see as key literacy practices across our sites.

First, our focus is on four overarching questions: What are people doing when they're working "with the program," as full members of the print-driven workplace culture? What outcomes and opportunities arise from successful participation? Alternatively, what are people doing when they're not participating, and what kinds of tensions arise related to lack of full participation? How are power relations and a sense of

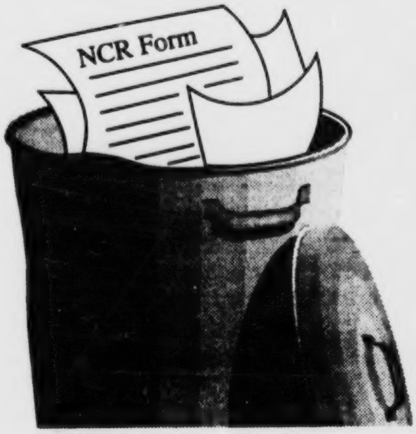
> *We've identified several major themes around literacy practices that weave throughout our sites. One is that literacy practices are powerfully shaped by many other aspects of people's work, like job knowledge and experience, production and time constraints, and relationships with co-workers and superiors, along with work tasks themselves.*

'value' at work embedded in participation in workplace literacies? We plan to address these questions by looking for both commonalities and differences across our sites. Second, we've identified several major themes around literacy practices that weave throughout our sites. One is that literacy practices are powerfully shaped by many other aspects of people's work, like job knowledge and experience, production and time constraints, and relationships with co-workers and superiors, along with work tasks themselves. Another is that print materials are frequently used in different ways to transmit the company culture and expectations, sometimes taking the form of posted notices and fliers, sometimes embedded in other kinds of documents and their use, and often supported and modified through personal interaction [See below].

We have found that the role of literacies in workplace learning and job training is a CONSTANT and has varying degrees of importance. For example, documents are used formally and informally in training, and the literacy demands in training may differ from those on the job. Documents are heavily used in quality improvement and control programs, in charting work flow and for accountability, for instance. We've observed that personalized and unofficial

One example of literacy at work: Power relations

The following brief portrait of a document practice at one of our sites illustrates how print materials can be used by management to enact company policies but by employees to serve other purposes.



The Non-Conformance Report (NCR) is a one-page form that the textile factory uses to document non-conforming situations as part of the company's quality procedures. Examples of non-conforming situations might include the wrong yarn sent by a supplier or fabric that is out of spec. Management views the NCR as a critical tool for documenting problems as part of the company's continuous improvement process. They were concerned that the reports were not always completed as required, which they attributed to employees' skills or knowledge problems. But the researcher's conversations with workers showed another meaning given to NCRs. Language like "writing me up," "writing them up," and " against me" abounded in their stories about NCRs. One could be "written up" by a superior or co-worker. Some would not complete an NCR because they did not want to create bad relations with a co-worker. One woman said that she did not want to write up an NCR for dirty equipment because she knew which co-worker was responsible. But as it turned out, the co-worker wrote her up for the same problem. Other workers, with a sense of security, used NCRs to achieve their own goals. One man in Shipping and Receiving used the NCR to document what he considered the Lab's lack of promptness picking up yarn from him. He believed that writing NCRs was "a way to get people to pay attention". The lab employee, his "feathers ruffled", suggested that he could "find plenty" to write up against the shipper.

While management identified the problem with NCRs as primarily a skills or knowledge gap, there was clearly much more going on. In order to understand the dynamics of worker participation in literate practices, we must examine the incentives or disincentives for doing so within the existing power relationships at the workplace.

work documents are sometimes used discreetly by individual workers to perform their jobs more effectively. These literacy-related themes, of complex integration of work and literacy, communicating company culture, learning and training, quality, and individualized work strategies will be explored in depth through our ongoing analysis.

Conclusion

The increasing importance of literacy in current Canadian workplaces is well-established in workplace education conversations. Our study corroborates its importance. But we're also learning through our research that literacy is a complex, multi-faceted social practice, and our preliminary findings echo the perspectives of the emerging voices on workplace literacy cited above. A focus on skills alone can't answer questions about how people participate in literate practices at work. In practice, workplace literacy is densely interwoven with knowledge and experience, purposes, activities, social positions and social relationships. In order to understand and evaluate the place of literacy in Canadian work sites, we need to look more intensely at literacy from this perspective. As our study progresses, we will continue to communicate our developing analysis.

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In-Sites team members include the authors, and Mary Ellen Belfiore, Tracy Defoe and Nancy Jackson. For more information please contact principal investigator, Judy Hunter at juhunter@acs.ryerson.ca.

May 2000

THE CANADIAN JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF ADULT EDUCATION

FINAL CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS ON LITERACY FOR A SPECIAL THEME ISSUE

This is the second and final call for manuscripts for an issue dedicated to the study and practice of adult literacy to be published in the fall of 2001. Manuscripts are due March 5, 2001. Please indicate Special Literacy Issue on your cover letter and the title page of your article.

Academics and practitioners are invited to submit research-based articles focusing on the theme of adult literacy or informed opinion pieces, meaning manuscripts may be written for either the research section or the perspectives section of the Journal as per the CJSAE guidelines (please see details at dmorrow@stfx.ca). All articles will be subject to peer-review.

For specific questions, please consult Editor-In-Chief, Allan Quigley, at aquigley@stfx.ca or Francophone Editor, Mohamed Hrimech, at hrimechm@scedu.montreal.ca

LITERACY HEADLINES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

(A news service from LiteracyOnline)

http://literacyonline.org/headlines.html

This new information service of LiteracyOnline gathers a variety of news articles on literacy and adult basic education from national and international online newspapers and magazines. The service provides a window onto literacy efforts around the world by selecting relevant articles based on location and interest to literacy professionals worldwide.
The page is updated bi-weekly.

For more information, please contact editor@literacy.upenn.edu

(LiteracyOnline is sponsored jointly by the International Literacy Institute and the National Center on Adult Literacy at the Graduate School of Education/University of Pennsylania.)

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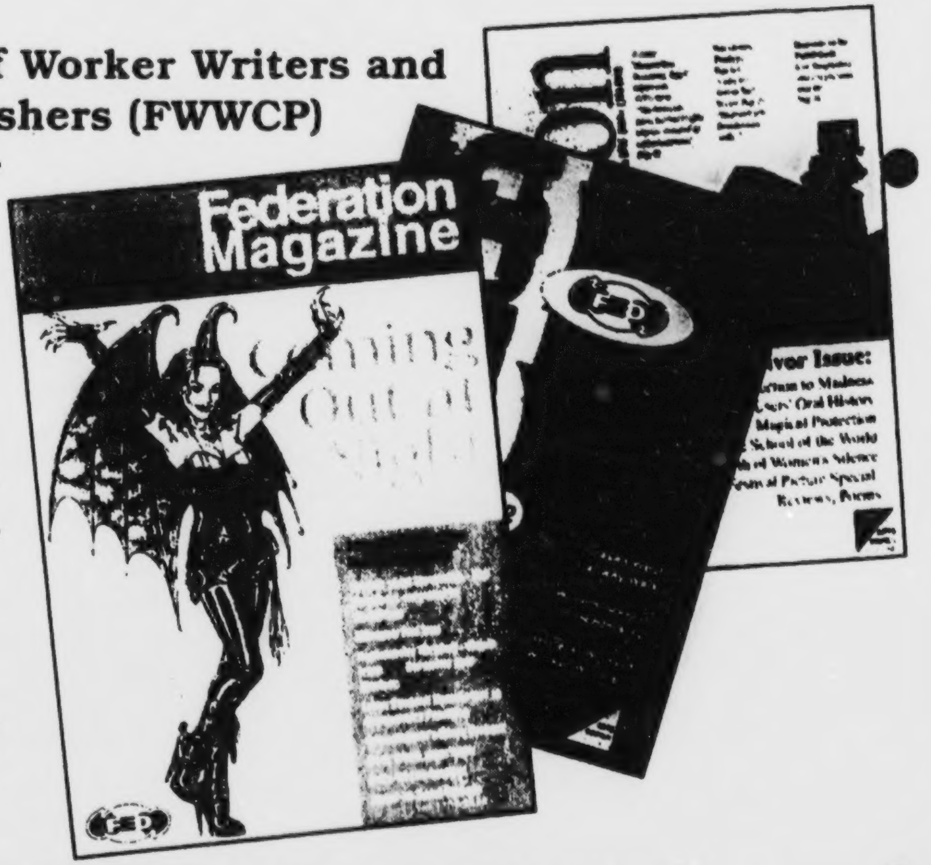
The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (FWWCP)



For nearly twenty-five years, the FWWCP (The Fed), has established itself as one of the leading voices for community writing and publishing in the UK. Its aim is to further working class writing and community publishing. It has a membership in Britain and abroad. The Fed organizes an annual Festival of Writing and weekends of writing workshops, and encourages networking. It runs a web site for a world wide audience and offers advice and training on writing, publishing and organizing.

The British Council supported the travel of Tom Woodin to participate in Grassroots: Community Writing, a strand of Montreal's Blue Metropolis Festival in April 2000. In this issue, we introduce the Fed to Canadian readers.

Introducing the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (UK)

by Tom Woodin

The Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (FWWCP or Fed) is a network of independent writing, publishing and literacy groups working to make writing and publishing accessible to all. These groups include working class and marginalised writers who want to express themselves creatively, and to publish and distribute their writing. Based in Britain, we have a growing international membership.

When the Fed started more than 25 years ago the very act of writing by school kids, working class people, black people or older people was treated as unacceptable or irrelevant by many in authority. The firing of a schoolteacher in the early 1970's for publishing poetry like Alan Gilbey's (p. 13) feels increasingly out of date, partly due to the success of the FWWCP.

A common starting point for much of this writing is our own experience. The idea that "Everyone has a story/history" is vital to encouraging people to make a start. Many do this by taping their memories or getting someone to scribe their words. Unsurprisingly the finished writing may have an oral quality based on the depth, fluidity and veracity of working class speech. In turn this writing may be performed back to an audience.

Writers often translate their internalised oppressions and difficult pasts into poetry, prose and oral history (for instance, Doug Mellor and Pat Smart, the current chair of the FWWCP). Some of the pieces represented here are infused with humour, as in that by Olive Rogers (p. 14), whilst much of it confounds simplistic ideas about "heritage," "nostalgia" or "therapy"' as in John Langley's writing (p. 14). As society changes, so new and different experiences come to be represented in writing by refugees, immigrants and survivors of the mental health system. Of course, the writing should also be able to stand on its own, not just be seen as representing a wider issue.

Fed writers develop in many different ways. Whilst some "make it" and become well-known, others use it to step beyond the limits of their individual experience or take a more challenging look at their own writing. Sometimes the words "local", "experience" and "community" can limit our horizons if they are incorporated into hard and fast rules on what can be written about. Arthur Thickett has used an extract from his short book, *Deck Hand West Pier* as a starting point for a longer autobiographical work incorporating memory and writing produced over the last 40 years (forthcoming from Working Press).

I hope that visiting each other, and forming links between groups of writers, will help to form new friendships whilst also challenging writers to learn new skills and create something new.

April 2000

Tom Woodin can be reached at:
fwwcp@cwcom.net
Web site: www.fwwcp.mcmail.com

WRITINGS FROM THE FED

Watney Street

Chattering, talking, holding up the traffic.
Women shopping buying fruit, food
on the lookout for a bargain.
Man on the corner selling stolen purses
one eye on the cash box
one eye on the look out
fruit seller shouting "buncha bananas"
someone buys some don't they know they're half rotten
One selling toys made in Hong Kong
old men under the arch selling broken plates.

Alan Gilbey

So Many of Us

There were so many kids in the same damn class. I think there were about forty-three and there must have been about twenty like me that couldn't read or write. You never got individual teaching, never, so I never got any help. Plus I never got any from my parents either. Looking back on it now, it's annoying in a way. Two brothers and one sister and none of them can read or write. Why? I don't know why. I've no idea. We've never in our lives talked about it. None of us have ever been out of work, and money's never been the problem. My mum and dad can read very well, for any forms I had to fill in, especially when I started work, my dad used to always fill in for me, but he always used to bloody complain. Or make a big issue out of it. And I thought, God...if there was any bloody one else I could ask, then I'd ask them. He used to go, "Oh bloody hell, give the bloody thing here, why couldn't you bloody learn to read and write at bloody school?" He showed my up knowing that I can't do it. He has to make a big issue out of it, as if he's doing me a big favour.

He tried to help once. It lasted three nights and the fourth night he said, "Oh, I'm watching something on telly, go away."

So I thought "I'm not asking you again." That was after I left school. I was sixteen or seventeen I think. They were always reading the pair of them.

Maths was no problem at school, I never had any problems with maths. I never did any sports, not that I didn't want to. Deep down I'd love to have done swimming, running, football but I was never asked and I never volunteered. I always stayed in the background. You see, you were always holding yourself back in case... I don't know.

Doug Mellor

Interview with Pat Smart

Oh I'm Pat Smart-I've always had a pen or pencil in my hand from a child, but never did anything with it except draw patterns and pictures in school and got rapped on the knuckles for it. Until, just after my mother died, which was 12 years ago, and I found some time on my hands. I've always told children stories and made up funny rhymes for them but never written them down. I decided to go to a night class, but found it was exactly like it was in school, sat behind a desk with the teacher in front, saying things like,
'Don't drift off the subject... you'll be sitting an exam soon'. The pressure was awful! Well, I didn't like that. Then I heard about writers' workshops. I found one in my own area, which was Stockbridge Writers. The main difference between an English class and a Writers' Workshop was, in the English I thought I was going to concentrate on where to put full stops and commas. They had me writing essays and it had to be in the form they wanted it, and then big red crosses...and notes at the bottom like,
'Try again'.
But going to the writers' workshop, nobody saw what I'd written. I'd just read it out so all the pauses were correct, where I wanted them to be. I found it wasn't important if I

was reading it out, and the spelling didn't matter an ounce, and that pleased me. I don't know why the teachers thought I was soft, because I'm not. I know that now, but 12 years ago, before I discovered the Fed, I would have agreed with them, that I was a "stupid girl" ---

Pat Smart

Once I was a Washing Machine

Once I was a Washing Machine
Or was it a cooker? I'm not really sure.
I think I alternated every second day
One thing is certain-
I needed very little maintenance.

When did I stop being a washing machine/cooker?

Well now, that's a fine question.
I believe it was when I realised that when my parts wore out they couldn't be replaced

But I, as a whole, could.

Not that I came out of my mechanical period unscathed.

Oh no! There are scars I bear to this day.
How my joints ache when it rains
They tell me it's either wear and tear or rust.
The answer I believe is to keep oneself well oiled.

Yes, I used to be a washing machine/cooker
But I'm liberated now, well...
I will be
When I've washed all those filthy socks and underpants
And cooked the evening meal for six hungry people.

Olive Rogers

From Always a Layman

Also in those days, because people had nothing - nothing at all - you never knew when your next door neighbour was going to commit suicide. People would be unable to pay their rent, which would only be five shillings for a house, and that shared with two or three families, living in slum conditions, not dirty but crowded because there was not enough money. You would suddenly find that a neighbour two doors away had drowned themselves or thrown themselves over the cliffs because the burden of life was intolerable, and that was at a time when you could buy a newspaper for a halfpenny. We used to do errands for people and were rewarded with a farthing, quarter of a penny... My home was very miserable, but it was not the fault of the family, it was the system. We had to beg for tickets for food and tickets to get blankets and things like that from the church. If we were ill, we had to go begging round ladies' houses to get certificates, which they paid for, worth perhaps five or ten shillings, and collect them together. If you had to have an operation you might be lucky and they would recommend you to other ladies until you had collected sufficient certificates to pay for the operation...

There was a marvellous neighbourly spirit in those years. If you were ill, the whole street was concerned and wanted to do something about it and they did. They took it in turns to make milk puddings and custards out of their little money. Anything they could do to help.

The concern was the same if you did not behave yourself. People used to come up and down outside your house with dustbin lids, banging them to shame you, if you were living with another man or woman, that sort of thing. You had to behave yourself.

John Langley

Thanks to the British Council

The Centre for Literacy thanks The British Council for helping to cover travel costs for Tom Woodin, Federation of Community Publishers and Writers to participate in Grassroots, Community Writing in April 2000.

Fireworks

Standing alone,
In the middle
Of a wet,
Muddy,
Open country road.
November 5th.
The clouds scream and echo
Explode
With rapid colour tonight.
White grey flashes,
Sprays of green, red, yellow and orange.
A small cloud twists in
Upon itself,
Briefly forms the shape of white lips,
which blows me a kiss,
then vanishes.

Solitary creature,
Standing in the wind and rain,
Experiencing his own
Internal fireworks,
Wanting to explode
And disappear
To somewhere,
Elsewhere,
Home.

Michael A. Bates

For writing from other groups at Grassroots 2000, see our web site www.nald.ca/litcent.htm under "What's New"

Call for new Voices

Voices Magazine has been missed in the literacy community since ending eight years of publication in Fall 1997. Now, co-founder and Managing Editor Lee Weinstein, with support from the John Howard Society, will be putting out a new issue in 2001. In a departure from earlier practice, this issue will have two workbooks created by Pat Campbell. They will contain exercises and activities to make the publication more usable in classrooms by instructors and students.

For details, contact: Lee Weinstein, Voices
Literacy Project, 5943-182 Street, Surrey,
BC, V3S 4M8, Tel.: (604) 574-0369 or
(604) 730-6844; Fax: (604) 730-6840;
E-mail: voicesproject@home.com

Grassroots 2001

Community writing: Literacy and the homeless

April 11- 12, 2001

Thomas Wolfe said figuratively, "You can't go home again."

If you literally have no home, you certainly cannot.

Wednesday, April 11, 2001
Workshop: 5:30-9:30 p.m.
The role of writing in relation to homelessness: Experiences from across the country.

Thursday, April 12, 2001
Time: t.b.a.
Blue Metropolis Literary Festival: A two-hour public reading

Since the 1960s, in industrialized societies, the thin line between financial security and insolvency has been crossed by many who find themselves living precarious lives without permanent shelter. They may be drug addicts, alcoholics, gamblers, or mental health patients pushed out of dwindling numbers of institutions; they may be victims of family abuse or family disintegration; or they may be sensitive people who have lost their way in a culture too fast to take notice. Many of the homeless have not had access to school; others are accomplished writers who can give voice and shape to the communities -that flourish on the street - the nurturing and the predatory. Homelessness has become so familiar, many of us no longer notice or we avert our eyes.

This year, Grassroots: Community Writing will gather writers from communities of the homeless who challenge some stereotypes about themselves. Worldwide today, there are newspapers written and sold by the homeless and former homeless to generate income. There are web sites such as iPoet.com and The Homeless Poets Café. The writers question the social conditions that produce their lives. Who writes? Who trains new writers? Who publishes them? Who benefits from their work? Does the writing change their collective reality? Does it change individual lives?

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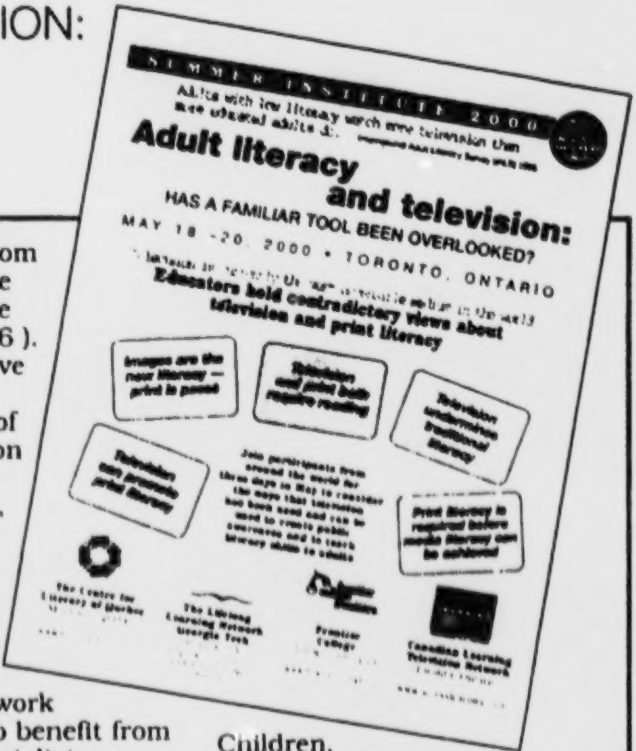
ADULT LITERACY AND TELEVISION:
Has a familiar tool been overlooked?


SUMMER INSTITUTE 2000

Adult literacy and television:

HAS A FAMILIAR TOOL BEEN OVERLOOKED?

MAY 18 -20, 2000 • TORONTO, ONTARIO

Educators hold contradictory views about television and print literacy

From May 18 -20, 2000, thirty-six participants from around the world met at the 11th Annual Summer Institute of The Centre for Literacy to consider how television has been used in many countries to create public awareness and to teach literacy skills to adults. This Institute brought together some of the pioneers in the field to meet with practitioners and policy-makers, share their experiences, and explore directions for the future. To provide historical context, The Centre produced an annotated bibliography tracing the use of television in adult literacy from the 1960s to the present day (See Resources, p. 36). Finally, to involve participants in the experience of making television as well as talking about it, part of the Institute was taped at Bravo! Studios by Canadian Learning Television. To work with CLT and to benefit from some of the specialists attending Summit 2000, an international confernce on Children, Youth and Media, the Institute was held in Toronto.

Participants at the Institute offered insights and argued from their own experience in creating television for adult basic skills, in using television, in having their students create video productions; a contingent from Ireland, where a massive national campaign got underway this fall, turned heads in describing a return to an even older technology — radio—for both awareness-raising and instruction.

Thumbnail sketches of presentations

- David Hargreaves, one of the designers of the original British adult literacy campaign in the 1970s, originator of BBC's *On the Move*, and now an international consultant, opened the conversation by laying out the possibilities and challenges as he sees them. [p. 19]
- Europe Singh, Director of the Innovation Centre at the University for Industry (UK) which is developing multimedia for learning to reach undereducated adults in the British workforce, suggested "repurposing," as an effective and efficient way of using television in an environment of merging media; this involves integrating segments of programs already created for other purposes into on-line curricula. [p. 23]
- Robert Kubey, writer/researcher on media education, from Rutgers University, offered some perspectives from his work on media literacy in the K-12 curriculum.
- Ellen Long, researcher with ABC CANADA, shared findings from an impact study of the Yellow Pages LEARN media campaign, identifying some of the reasons for adult learners participating/not participating in adult basic education. [p. 34]
- Inez Bailey, Executive Director of Ireland's National Adult Literacy Alliance (NALA), highlighted their experience using radio for basic skills teaching and described a new national awareness and teaching campaign being undertaken in the Fall of 2000. [p. 25]
- Maura Donnelly from the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA) described the pilot-projects of TV411 now being launched in the US, touching on its innovative

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec
Montreal, Quebec

The Lifelong Learning Network Georgia Tech
Atlanta, GA

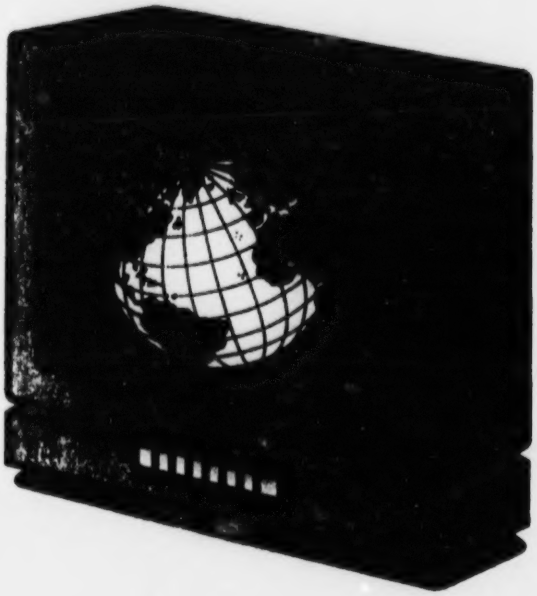
Frontier College
Toronto, Ontario

Canadian Learning Television Network
Toronto, Ontario

approach and the challenges it poses to traditional learning and funding models. [p. 27]

- Cathy Coleman, of World Education/SABES (Boston), shared media production projects that she created with her students in local cable network studios.
- Mona Arsenault, a tutor from Montreal, explained how she capitalized on a student's interest in hockey to teach an intellectually disabled adult to read and use [p. 32] numbers by watching taped games of Hockey Night in Canada. [p. 32]
- Sophia Wu, Associate Professor, College of Communication, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, used her research on TV-viewing habits of Taiwanese children to raise the issue of the critical role required of adults in mediating children's viewing, a role not played very effectively even by highly literate parents. [p. 30]
- Pauline McNaughton, AlphaPlus Centre (Toronto) described the collaboration between AlphaPlus and TVOntario to produce "Falling Through the

The premise behind the Institute



Television is a powerful medium. It is accessible around the world and across the socio-economic spectrum. The poorest home in North America usually has a television set, while 20% of Americans did not have a telephone in 1996. The 1995 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) confirmed that adults with limited literacy in the industrialized world watch more television than higher educated adults do. Critics immediately leaped to the conclusion that television was to blame for a low level of literacy. However, the researchers pointed out that it was more likely that this group uses television as their primary source of information because they find reading too difficult.

Most teachers of literacy have tended to see adult literacy and television as the enemy. But there is a growing understanding that the nature of literacy is changing, and that learning to read and write print is not enough. Words, image and sound are creating new literacies.

With this in mind, educators are challenged to find ways of using this medium to address the learning needs of adults at the basic skills levels. Since early teaching models in selected US states in the 1960s and the first national television initiatives in the mid-70's in Britain to reach this audience, many national campaigns and teaching programs have been developed around the world. They have all focused on print literacy. None of them has been sustained. What are the possibilities for the 21st century?

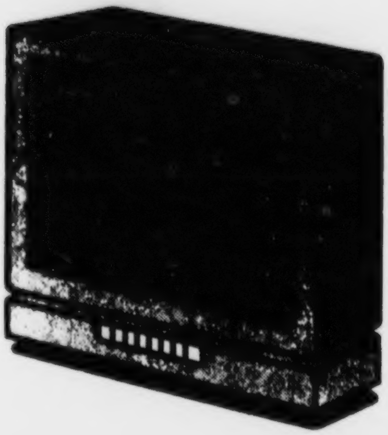
Television and adult literacy — The questions and issues posed

- How has television been used to create public awareness of adult literacy? Has it changed stereotypes? Reinforced old ones? Created new ones?
- How is television best used with adult basic skills students? As a motivator to create a sense of possibility? As a primary teaching tool? As a supplement to traditional instruction?
- Is television an effective medium for teaching reading and writing to adults? Why do discussions of media literacy happen only in schools? Have the strengths of the medium been used to the fullest?
- How do current models of adult basic learning take account of the potential of merging technologies? Why is so much attention focused on computers and the Internet, and so little on a medium that is already accessible?
- Are literacy teachers open to, and able to use, television as a teaching tool? What is their role in the process?
- Who is interested in funding learning television for basic learners? How do they monitor "outcomes?"
- Who is best positioned to develop programming? The public broadcasting sector? The private? Community television? Partnerships?

Cracks," a video introducing the adult literacy issue to a broader audience.

- Ron Keast, President and CEO Access Television and Canadian Learning Television, gave a private broadcaster's perspective on the potential relationship between TV producers and adult educators.
- Beth Odem and Greg Bailey, from Literacy Action Atlanta, described their work as literacy teachers on live TV and on video for the Georgia tech Lifelong Learning Network. Georgia Tech eventually lost its funding for this work, despite excellent evaluations, partly because the bottom line cost was considered too high.
- Millie Fazey, from Kentucky Educational Television (KET) gave an overview of the KET televised GED programming which has had continuing success in attracting adult basic learners.

From multi-million dollar investments to low-budget home-made interventions, these and other examples illustrated the complexity of the subject.



A high point of the three days was an afternoon's Colloquium filmed by Canadian Learning Television at Bravo! Studios and hosted by TV personality Daniel Richler. Three panels explored and argued about what television can offer the adult literacy community and about the challenges facing that community around the world. Can television teach? Can it only motivate? Do national campaigns work? What can teachers do with television? How do print and media literacy connect? What are appropriate roles for volunteers in literacy? How does culture affect viewer expectations of television? How do race, gender, and ethnicity make themselves felt in literacy classrooms and in television representations of adult learners? Do we stereotype learners? Do we patronize them? Issues that are often avoided or skirted were aired at the Colloquium. The tapes of that exchange have been edited, shown on Canadian Learning Television (in December 2000, to be repeated in February 2001), and made available for purchase (See p. 31).

The Summer Institute Televised Colloquium was funded by The National Literacy Secretariat, and the Office of Learning Technologies, Human Resources Development Canada

Highlights of some presentations and materials are collected in this insert of LACMF with more available on our web site.
www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Adult literacy and television: Some thoughts

by David Hargreaves, Consultant UK

(L.) David Hargreaves, former BBC producer and creator of On the Move.
(R.) Europe Singh, Innovation Centre, Ufi, UK.

On televised literacy campaigns and portrayals of literacy

The most obviously successful uses of television in relation to adult literacy have been in raising awareness, in creating "campaign atmospheres," in eroding inhibition, and in making it possible for people to come forward for help. In the UK this was first exemplified in the middle and late 1970s by the national adult literacy campaign, involving many agencies, with broadcasting as its high profile outreach. The same pattern occurred in the 1980s in Project Literacy US (PLUS), and in campaigning programming in Canada. Around the developing world, this use of broadcasting has been seen in Cuba, India, Mexico and many other societies. Many such "campaigns," including the one in the UK, have also used broadcasting to recruit volunteer tutors.

These applications of broadcasting have changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. They've made a real impact in increasing public understanding of the issues, and in provoking an increase in the budgetary resources going to literacy work. We must carry on using broadcasting to publicize learning opportunities and to try to erode the inhibitions and stigmas that stand in the way of them being pursued.

In the UK, the BBC continues to make its contribution through high profile "campaigns" (e.g. for family literacy and for numeracy) and independent commercial broadcasters making their's, through the sensitive placing of characters and story lines in televised dramas, including long running series. The producers have carefully taken advice and the portrayal of characters has not usually been demeaning or patronising. In the last year in the UK, we have had thoughtful and sensitively written story lines in two of our most popular series on commercial television, "Coronation Street" and "Brookside", with, in the latter case, excellent arrangements put in place for follow-up and related learning resources being made available. As more and more homes get on-line, the scope multiplies for us to offer web sites with expanded help, suggestions and content.

Responsibilities of broadcasters

However, it's worth reflecting on the wider social dynamics of such "motivational" broadcasting and on the relative responsibilities of broadcasters and those in national agencies concerned with literacy work. National broadcasting is a potentially very powerful instrument, but it's insensitive to local circumstance. Both in the UK and the US, national broadcasting has sometimes called forward demand in places ill-equipped to provide for it, leading to disappointment and perhaps damage. In the case of the UK's first campaign our broadcasting went on remorselessly in peak time every week for two years. In some areas the parallel effort to use broadcasting to recruit volunteer tutors was effective, but often the volunteers arose in middle class areas rather than in the areas of deprivation where they were most needed.

So you could say that it would be irresponsible for a national or local broadcaster to embark on projects or story lines in this area without consultation months or even years beforehand with the agencies providing face-to-face help. In the case of the BBC's work this has always been done, and since the late 1970s there has been a national agency, now called the Basic Skills Agency, with whom that conversation could be had. (In our first efforts there was no such agency, and we had to travel the land talking individually to each of the 120 Local Education Authorities involved, forming our own view of the degree to which there was a consensus).

This seemed a responsible way to proceed. But there is a contrary view. The BBC is sometimes berated for keeping its contribution to literacy work in the 1980s and 1990s at a more calmly paced level than the heady drive of the 1970s. This judgement about level, however, has been made through co-operation with the Basic Skills Agency. The Agency steadily and patiently works to create resources and to help communities across the country build a solid, high quality,

L.). Keval Kumar, Professor of Communications, media literacy, Poona University, India. (R.) Loretta Hughes, Ireland, participants at the Institute.

professional service in the wake of the sometimes desperate expansion and improvisation of the late 1970s, when the national literacy campaign had multiplied demand manyfold. It collaborates both with the BBC and the new "University for Industry (UfI)." The Agency is very appreciative of what broadcasting can usefully do, but it is also keenly aware of the downside of unplanned-for high impact national television..

...The need is still very large, and it can be argued that resources to meet it only get created or switched when the latent demand for adult basic education is transformed into embarrassingly visible present urgent reality. The argument is that the better resources available in the 1980s and the 1990s were won as a result of the BBC and its partners in the 1970s pushing ahead with broadcasting on a scale sometimes embarrassing and difficult for providers of face to face help. Suddenly large scale demand was visible, and was no longer a matter of meek and patient advocacy but of raw and crying need.

So one theme we might discuss is how far broadcasters should be encouraged to rock the boat in this area on their own initiative. Can they, should they, feel free to bring more than the tip of this particular iceberg into view, in a way which is difficult and bruising for everyone involved, including would-be learners who may have frustrating waits for the help which the broadcast often makes seem so easily available? As educational agencies, working with broadcasters, should we tread cautiously in what we urge them to do? Or, should we take a deep breath and try to use television to mobilize massive learner demand, even knowing that in the short term we may not have the human and other resources to cope properly with it?

Television for adult literacy/basic skills instruction

Turning to a different theme, can broadcasters do more in the literacy field than motivate, disinhibit, and create awareness? Can broadcasters create resources from which adults at home can learn? Should they? Here we enter an area about which much less is known and in which I can only make assertions, unsubstantiated by relevant research findings. My major disappointment with broadcasters, including the BBC, is how little they have tried, how easily they have persuaded themselves that the job is un-doable, and even if doable, unsuitable for transmission at anything except a graveyard time.

Is television programming that advances skill acquisition in basic skills possible? My assertion is that it is, if the educational goals are realistically selected. Such goals might for example be to introduce a concept - e.g. drafting, estimating, use of an index, laying out a letter. Even a single viewing, unsupported by print or other support, could be hoped to have some effect in introducing ideas like these. Clearly, developing phonic skills or skills of manipulating numbers is a different matter. Corrected individualised practice couldn't be delivered by the old-style linear analogue television we have known until now; so, using television for the real work of consolidated skill acquisition in such areas wasn't possible. However the coupling we can now achieve to on-line learning resources potentially increases efficacy enormously. The interactivity possible with digital television will change the whole nature of how we view — a whole seminar subject in itself!

It seems to me that we shouldn't be gloomy about television's ability to enhance skills simply because it may not be able to enhance all skills. Probably the most rewarding case study for us to follow in detail over the next few years is the GED preparation work of Kentucky Education Television. KET has for years developed and refined TV programmes and related materials of proven efficacy for the GED. The new KET/PBS/NCAL "Literacy Link" project offers on-line study resources as well as traditional media, and it will take us further into understanding how these elements can be used together than we have ever been before. Indeed it brings us to a strategic question we should debate: Is TV's role in the future essentially to be that of leading learners to the on-line and streamed video learning tools, or has it a real instructional value over and above that?

Roles of public/ private broadcasters

It's certainly convenient for the public broadcasters to define TV's future educational role as being essentially signposting. In Europe they have become steadily more reluctant to attempt on-screen teaching to adults. Public service broadcasters find themselves under ever-greater competitive pressure as more and more channels, cable, satellite, and digital technology are available in the home. To justify their claim on continued public financing, such channels need more and more to demonstrate that they are used for a reasonable amount of the time by a large proportion of the public. Achieving that level of use in a fragmenting marketplace pushes them steadily further and further into the mainstream, trimming away from the schedule the broadcasting for specialised, needy, smaller audiences, and placing it — if at all — as in the UK, in the night hours. And since audiences in the night hours, even for recording, can only be of modest size, we enter a vicious circle in which little is spent on publicizing, and little on creation. Fulfilling this part of the public service obligation through on-line resources rather than accessible broadcasts can make sense to the broadcaster.

All of us attending the Institute know that in Europe and North America the numbers of adults with basic skills barely sufficient for coping runs into enormous numbers - somewhere above 20% - with the level showing little long term decline. Almost any other population group of this size is of real interest to television executives in devising shows and developing schedules.

On the future of television for adult literacy learning and for professional development

I think myself that to envisage television's future contribution to adult learning of basic skills as being only to motivate and to signpost would be very defeatist. We are all constantly learning from the television which flows through our daily lives without our sitting down at our computers. We learn from entertainment and drama as well as from journalism and factual programmes. Points are graphically and powerfully made by the techniques, creativity and skill of programme makers in all genres, including advertising. And we learn further because such television is talked about between us, at home and at work - it's part of our shared experience. We shouldn't imagine television's future contribution to adult literacy learning as just coming from the makers of educational programmes and on-line learning resources. I think we should continue to aspire to harness truly popular television to the service of advancing adult literacy.

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In the first phase of broadcasters' commitment to help people with poor literacy skills, we were fixated on those in most extreme need, whose plight was most dramatic, poignant, and in a way lent itself most naturally to being the subject of television programs. I believe we can offer some useful television learning resources to people with very limited skills. But such learners' confidence is often very fragile and it would be terrible if an offered television learning resource was not comprehensible to them and damaged their self-esteem further. So extreme care is needed.

But I see the real opportunity for television as being less in that area than in trying to help the 20% of us whose need is very real but less extreme. These are people whose situation is not exceptional - indeed it is in many ways normal. Our prosperous developed societies— and their broadcasters— have been very reluctant to accept the truth which is under our nose — that enormous numbers of us cannot use reading, writing and number skills reliably and to good effect, even though we are living good and happy lives. Once we acknowledge the real scale of that phenomenon, then I think broadcasters can and should become creative in trying to design popular, useful programs related to it. Just as we have over the years created unpatronising and entertaining television vehicles for learning about cooking, gardening, fitness, health, DIY, and consumer vigilance, so we should be able to do this for basic skills.

In the United States, the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA) has for the last few years been working determinedly and resourcefully to create just such a series, now up and running, called "TV 411." It is ambitious and brave in using good writers, performers and producers from mainstream TV to make educational points through sequences styled in the main genres of popular TV. Watching "TV 411" you can see how many other shows in different television genres, from game shows to soap operas, could be created which entertainingly and unpatronisingly advance basic skill acquisition.

Playing devil's advocate

But, says the devil's advocate, could such shows ever get transmitted on the television channels watched by most of the hoped for audience? The experience of ALMA in rolling out "TV 411" will be critical evidence here. In its first phase "TV 411" was transmitted in four development areas (Pittsburgh, Seattle, El Paso and New York), where the local community really put its back into making the most of the impact broadcasting could create and prepared very thoroughly and caringly for it. However "TV 411" was mainly transmitted in these areas on PBS and community cable - perhaps not always the outlets ideal for reaching blue collar Americans. The show was developed outside the belly of a broadcaster, so it has to try to win broadcasters over to its virtues. It's now on offer to broadcasters all over the US and so far, about 90 public television stations have committed to carrying the series, meaning it is, in geographical terms at least, accessible to over 50% of the US population. This is a real achievement, and, at the Institute, we'll be able to hear more about the take up, response, and broadcasting time achieved so far.

In an ideal world such shows in the future would be developed from the start with and by broadcasters who are committed to reaching a mass audience. Imagine, say, Oprah Winfry or Roseanne Barr at the centre of such a show. The frustrations of not understanding printed instructions, or assessing percentage discounts accurately, or decoding cunningly phrased descriptions of pricing or guarantees, isn't a minority experience – it's part of almost all our lives in some degree. Charismatic presenters and good writers can get basic points across about these matters, and the related basic skills. And as interactivity becomes a real part of digital television the scope for enjoyable and effective viewer involvement obviously increases.

But mainstream channels aren't the only way forward. In the digital world, there will be many channels specific to education - some of them already with us, like BBC Knowledge, and Canadian Learning Television. Probably most of these will design themselves around the concept of lifelong learning, and will seek to cater to interests across a wide educational spectrum.

Basics – common-sense stuff

Can there be niche channels pitched specifically at the "basics" level, related to coping with everyday life and the skills it demands of us? Why not, if the character and profile are carefully and sensitively shaped? Such channels would (in marketing-speak) be positioned as being consumer friendly offering "know-how", getting value for money, getting to grips with baffling text and forms, getting the right help for your kids - basics. Practical common-sense stuff, which all of us sometimes need. We could envisage, for instance, a supermarket chain taking advertising on such a channel. Even public agencies might commission programming, explaining clearly and explicitly, at a realistic pace, key aspects of social security, how to complete tax or health insurance forms etc. - areas where high costs arise through staff having to struggle with incomplete returns. I would envisage such a channel presenting itself more as consumer guidance than education, with the basic skills points flowing out of the consumer or parenting issues.

> *As the broadcasting spectrum splinters, and almost an infinite number of digital niche channels become possible, why can't we invent one pitched specifically at the the basic level which develops its own programming at low cost and is advertiser-supported?*

As the broadcasting spectrum splinters, and almost an infinite number of digital niche channels become possible, why can't we invent one which develops its own programming at low cost and is advertiser-supported? This channel, while it steadily builds up its own inventory of original programming, would also carry programs like "TV 411," "Crossroads Café," and "GED" which already exist? Obviously, like all channels in the future, there would be related web-sites and gateways to more resources and more help, some of it individualised. As with all the emergent niche channels, the budget for publicity and marketing would be heavy.

So although the tide of broadcasting history is making it harder for the public service broadcasters to help literacy by creating and broadcasting learning resource programs on traditional generalist mainstream channels, the fragmentation is creating new opportunities for dedicated channels. The other good news is that the costs of TV production have fallen dramatically with the arrival of digital equipment, and the disappearance of all the old craft boundaries and restrictive working practices which once made TV cumbersome and expensive. We are now at the point where anyone with a digital mini-cam can create videos to illustrate or convey a point or to offer personal testimony, to share experience.

Finally, these shifts offer great opportunities to literacy teachers for professional sharing and for professional debate about techniques. In the US, the teleconferences organised by the NCAL and the PBS Adult Learning Service show what can be done and now form a regular part of the ongoing "Literacy Links" project. Georgia Tech's Lifelong Learning Network also broke new ground in this area. Perhaps we can look ahead to other dedicated digital television channels which for some hours each day broadcast resources which teachers can record, sharing professional experience, and sharing material created or garnered locally on video.

So I am an enthusiast for what TV can do. We are just at the beginning of the possibilities!

April 2000

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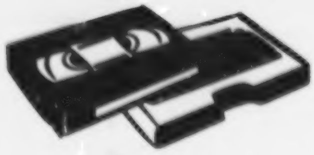
Using television/video for adult learning



by Europe Singh, University for Industry, UK

Introduction

Many claims are made for television. It can "cause" youngsters to become delinquents, rapists to rape; it can corrupt and deprave; it can turn "nice people" into racists and sexists. Without wanting to enter the minefields that represent these debates, there is probably some validity in all these propositions.

What appears to be taken for granted without much debate, however, is that television can educate. The advantages of television are of course great: it is ubiquitous – even the poorest household has one; it is engaging – in many environments the off-switch has ceased to function through lack of use (and have you ever been in a bar where there is a TV... your eye is inexorably drawn towards it. It may be the most puerile drivel, but you can't focus on the friend you haven't seen for months because you are straining to catch the exchange between JR and Sue Ellen that took place decades ago and is being shown again for those tired of life). TV can take us into worlds and human interactions that we would have to wait a lifetime to observe in the flesh. But can it educate? The BBC's mission, so familiar to many in the UK and I suspect elsewhere, is, with typical Reithian high-mindedness: "to educate, inform and entertain." Education is top of the list.

While television can do some things extremely well, it does others very poorly. We have to separate the usefulness from the hype. We also need to agree on what we understand by education and more specifically by learning.

For me, learning is an active process. We have to do something with the inputs.
We have to find ways of connecting what we observe on that flickering screen with our existing meanings. Although the constructivist paradigm is not the only one for modelling learning, it is the one I am using here to understand this process. Television, however, as it is currently consumed by millions, is an essentially passive medium. If we want it to be put to the service of learning then we have to do things with it. For ten years I worked in BBC education and for the last two years I've been working in a new organisation called University for Industry (UfI). In that time I have worked on many uses of the televisual form, ranging from mainstream broadcast television to video-rich multimedia.

While television can do some things extremely well, it does others very poorly. We have to separate the usefulness from the hype. We also need to agree what we understand by education and more specifically by learning.

I want to talk about a number of issues, which I will illustrate with samples of material.

I want to focus on three areas:

- Using television and video
  How can the medium be used effectively for the education of adults and particularly those with poor basic skills?
- Future scenarios
  With the gradual demise of analogue television and the convergence of digital TV and global computer networks, what use will TV and video be in delivering learning?
- Problems
  The UfI is posited on computer-based distance learning for basic skills (and many other course areas) but how effective is this for the variety of adult learners and what are the unresolved problems?

Television and video for ABE motivation

TV can act as a great motivator. We have seen the power of TV advertising, and equally TV can encourage adults to do something about their skills shortages. Devices such as role modelling, empathy, guilt and shame, but above all, wit can be used to propel viewers to the telephone, SAE or postcard. Read and Write Together was a literacy campaign run on BBC TV in 1995. It used guilt to encourage parents to telephone a helpline and order a pack to help their kids with reading. The Basic Skills Agency printed 50 000 packs and was almost bankrupted when the response reached 1/3 of a million. The helpline could also provide – as did the pack – information on family literacy classes (which are still running successfully in many parts of the country).

The numeracy campaign, Count Me In, run in 1998 by the BBC, didn't have as big an impact: 180 000 callers rang for the booklet or CD-ROM but the "conversion rate" to numbers on courses was disappointing -- no more than a few thousand in traditional provision. It suffered from some confusion about the target audience and poor strategies to reach them. The CD-ROM proved a big success with colleges, however, and is still being used with adults on basic numeracy courses. We currently have a new numeracy campaign running on BBC TV also called Count Me In, but this time focused on parents of young children once again. What we call "the low hanging fruit."

In general though it is much harder to attract learners to improve their numeracy than to improve their literacy. The hook is all important as witnessed by the enormously successful "Computers Don't Bite" campaign calling on adults to catch up and get some computer skills.

In the UK our government is obsessed with the internet. Everything and anything is possible through the internet, we are told.

So television is a good motivator, but the target audience, the proposition and the development of the "hooks" have to be well researched. Radio and local radio should not be forgotten.

Learning by stealth

Broadcast television is obsessed with viewing figures; so anything that may cause viewers to switch over or switch off is anathema. Education – unless it is learning about furry animals or natural disasters Discovery-Channel-style – is written out of the equation. The favoured approach of TV is what is called "education by stealth;" you sneak up on the viewer David Attenborough-like and inject them with a dose of education. I must admit that I have never seen an example of this that worked for basic skills. Channel 4 bravely integrated some plot lines into its soap, "Brookside," but this again was motivational rather than didactic, and a helpline was trailed after the programme. Although the impact was very limited – a few thousand learners nationally – for the first time for a broadcast-led campaign, people with very poor skills responded.

As a didactic tool

In 1995, I started running a late night service for Further Education (FE) and adult colleges in "dead" time in the middle of the night. It was a system pioneered by David Hargreaves as BBC Select. But this time it was free. We looked at how TV could be used to deliver learning in a more didactic way. We drew on constructivist thinking and best practice of lecturers in designing FETV and used extracts from a wide variety of TV genres. We called this repurposing.

Repurposing

Repurposing also seemed to me to fit with new digital platforms: Nuggets of TV wrapped around with activities.

In a similar way, we designed new programming with the possibility of migration in mind.

This then was the strategy: Yes to have the separate media - TV/print/website, but also to develop multimedia products using these assets. Given the state of technology, initially this would be on CD-ROM or DVD.

Future scenarios

In the UK our government is obsessed with the internet. Everything and anything is possible through the internet, we are told. We are also told that convergence of internet and digital narrow-casting will be even better. These technologies offer opportunities for learning as well as increasing the profits of multimedia corporations with direct sales etc. But how soon will this convergence deliver the benefits to learning? What will it deliver? How keen are the owners of the delivery mechanisms to provide learning especially basic skills which may deliver little profit?.. And most importantly how soon will those who we want to reach have access to this technology?

Some answers from a UK perspective

At the Ufl one interim solution to bandwidth and connectivity issues was to use hybrid forms employing local assets with thin connectivity.

Ufl

So what is Ufl all about? Ufl is a new initiative to provide flexible learning for millions of adults. A key target is basic skills.

Problems

Many problems remain in reaching learners and enticing them to improve their skills. Further issues arise in trying to deliver convenient open and distance learning particularly for those with poor basic skills. We have developed strategies for many of these but serious questions still remain in the areas of:
• Access • Interactivity • Quality and Robustness of networks • Learner support • Staff Development • Social aspects of learning • Recognition of achievement

Conclusion

TV is a powerful medium that can be used to motivate; with the right wrap-around it can be an effective resource for learning. But it is not the case that TV on its own can educate – it can transmit information, it can engage and entertain and as such it can provide a powerful starting point for the learning process. The future is digital and video does not sit comfortably with the current state of these technologies, but over time I believe that video will become an essential ingredient of effective multimedia learning whether down a digital cable or transmitted over the air.

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RADIO AND ADULT LITERACY IN IRELAND

Literacy through the Airwaves

This radio project was developed under the management of the National Adult Literacy Agency: Tipp FM and the Vocational Education Committees of Tipperary (North and South Riding) and County Mayo.

Inez Bailey, Executive Director of the National Adult Literacy Agency, Dublin, gave an overview of current radio and TV interventions in Ireland.

Evaluated June 1999

Selections from the Summary of Conclusions

Conclusions

1. Literacy through the Airwaves was instrumental in recruiting literacy students to local adult literacy schemes, although it is difficult to quantify this effect. If the programmes were more widely accessible, this effect could be expected to increase.

2. All interviewees reported having enjoyed listening to the programmes and all reported that they had made some progress in their reading and writing. This progress was expressed mostly in terms of specific knowledge and skills which had previously been unknown, or which learners now had the opportunity to practise. The specific gains made by learners varied, according to their starting level of skill, their interests and requirements. The most frequently-mentioned gains were: form-filling, letter-writing, dictionary work, word-building, syllables.

3. Literacy through the Airwaves targeted a wide range of literacy levels. Consequently, there were mixed views from interviewees regarding the pace and level of difficulty of the radio and print materials. Just under half of those who responded to this question found the level and pace appropriate, whereas a small number found it difficult, especially after the first four lessons. However, the accessibility of the series was maximised by the fact that almost everyone contacted was receiving help with the work, either from an adult literacy tutor, or from a friend. It was generally agreed that a beginner working alone would find the material too difficult.

4. Learners also reported more general benefits deriving from the programmes, for example: being able to work on reading and writing at home; feeling that they were not the only one with a problem in reading and writing; feeling happy that they were doing something about the problem.

5. Tutors had a positive response to the radio and print materials. They reported that these were very useful as a resource to complement the work they were doing with students, or to provide a focus for it. Some people thought that the series and support material would provide valuable material for tutor training, which is needed in the current climate of expansion of literacy schemes. The programmes also increase the amount of contact time which is available to literacy students, which is currently limited to two hours per week of face-to-face contact with a tutor.

6. Tutors and students reported that the content of the print and radio materials was relevant to learners' needs.

7. Reception on the dedicated frequency, on which the Tipperary series was transmitted, was unpredictable.

8. Transmission times were inconvenient for most people. Evenings, are busy times in families, especially between 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Some people thought that a later transmission time, such as 10 p.m., would attract more listeners; others suggested that a morning slot would access people who were at home during the day.

9. It was felt that it was a good idea to repeat programmes, as this gave listeners the opportunity to review material.

10. The format of the programmes, which simulated a typical literacy session, was well-received. Two or more students would increase the level of interaction.

11. The freephone helpline was accessed by 29 calls in ten weeks. It was generally thought that it was a good idea to have a helpline for those who were comfortable with using the telephone, but that there ought to be additional support mechanisms in place also.

12. There was strong emphasis on the need for some form of student support in following the series. Most of the respondents were receiving help from their literacy tutor and although this process was not formally built into the project, it was instrumental in allowing learners to maximise the benefits they derived from it.

13. Literacy through the Airwaves achieved the aims of raising awareness of the availability of literacy support among people who need help with reading and writing; and assisting learners in making progress in their reading and writing. It should be noted, however, that Literacy through the Airwaves does not replace the existing service but rather, provides a resource to support them.

Further information: www.nala.ie

IRELAND - TV AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROJECT

TV Project Read Write Now: Learning Objectives

Mission Statement
To develop and deliver a distance learning programme in adult basic education, consisting of a series of 12 television programmes supported by a printed study pack, which will help adults improve their reading and writing skills in the privacy of their own homes.

General Aims
At the end of this series the learners will

1. Improve their reading, writing and spelling skills up to NCVA Foundation Level standard.
2. Practice reading and writing skills in everyday situations
3. Continue on a lifelong learning process

Specific Learning Objectives, and Outcomes

At the end of the series the learners will be able to

1. use the support pack &
2. understand alphabetical order
For example, locate a phone number in a phone book or yellow pages, use a dictionary, use an address book, locate required data from an index or table of contents, and find a horse on the Grand National Card.

3. construct simple written sentences
For example, use full stops, capital letters / small letters, understand simple grammar and improve their spelling through such techniques as the use of syllables, vowels and word building.

4. understand basic written notes / instructions
For example, understand and respond appropriately to common signs, workplace notices, health and safety signs, forms, written instructions on convenience food, menus, timetables and advertisements for concerts.

5. write a short note / simple instructions
For example, write their own name and address, take down a telephone message, write a shopping list or a packing list for a journey, write a postcard and get well card, write a note to call a meeting at work or give instructions to a family member to collect them from the station at 8.00 p.m.

6. read and understand basic written text / letters
For example, read a simple newspaper article, TV Guide, a short magazine article, a letter, a bill, the brief contents of a convenience food, the table of contents of a lawnmower manual, read a short story to their children or help them with their homework.

7. write a letter
For example, write a short personal letter to a friend, write to a teacher excusing a child from school, and write more formal letters such as a letter applying for a job, an invitation to present trophies at the football club dinner dance.

8. improve spelling
For example, spelling tips and techniques. These will be a constant component of each programme/objective.

9. understand and complete simple forms
For example, read, understand and complete a social welfare form, a job application a membership form for a club, apply for a driving licence, write a cheque, make a lodgement at a bank, a form for PRSI benefits, and an airport immigration form to the USA.

10. improve quantitative literacy
For example, calendar, timetables, write a cheque. These will be addressed throughout the twelve programmes.

© National Adult Literacy Agency, Ireland

What has been achieved?
The program began in September 2000, broadcast on Tuesday nights at 11:00 p.m. on the mian TV channel and repeated on Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. Ratings were very high. The first program was viewed by 152,994 people (4.3% of the total population, or 22% of those viewing at the time). The highest ratings were in weeks 2 and 7, with 192,132 viewers.

The free telephone tutor support line had 5 tutors on the job from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Saturday. From the beginning of September to the end of October they had received 9000 individual calls requesting learning packs. In total, they sent more than 26,000 packs. More than 500 referrals were made to literacy programs.

Source: Helen Ryan, Development worker, NALA. Tel.: (01) 855 4332; Fax: (01) 855 5475.

November 2000

AN AMERICAN EXPERIMENT

TV411 —Reaching learners out of class — The Pilot Year research

(excerpts from "Blurring the boundaries between acquisition and learning: Television-based literacy services in community and home contexts" a paper by Deborah D'Amico and Maura Donnelly, Research Associates, Adult Literacy Media Alliance, NY)

Maura Donnelly presented an overview of this article at the Institute.

TV 411
IN PRINT
Read This First
guid
the M
fron
TV 411

[After explaining the theoretical framework for the project, the paper reviews the pilot year experience of TV411, a media-based national literacy service for pre-GED learners that embeds learning in real life contexts and includes a community outreach component that provides materials in both educational and less formal learning environments. Through telephone surveys, site visits, staff development and training sessions, ALMA staff documented how TV411 was being used in 200 "hubs" in four US cities. An outside research team is conducting pilot studies of learning outcomes among adults using TV411 in settings which vary along a continuum of support. ed.]

Moving learning beyond the classroom

... Bringing the outside world into the classroom, via media and computer technology, and moving instruction beyond the physical walls of educational settings generates a more fluid relationship between learning environments and the worlds of adult learners. Television and video expand a teacher's resources, making it possible to bring celebrity speakers, adult learner role models, and real-life contexts, such as looking under the hood of a car, into the classroom. These media also make it possible to use graphics and animation to explain complex concepts and to comfortably visit and experience such literacy rich settings as bookstores and libraries. The Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA) created TV411 to be the centerpiece of a television and video-based national literacy service. TV411's curriculum is recursive and iterative, rather than scope and sequence, and is based on extensive research with adult learners and practitioners concerning both the skills and contexts most relevant to the target audience. Three themes —parenting, money and health— emerged from this work as critical to adult learners and to the literacy challenges they face. The magazine style format mimics familiar television genres, such as situation comedies, music videos, sports, drama, and news shows, placing learning in a comfortable and pleasurable context.

TV411 video and print materials can be used in a range of settings with varying support for learners. Examples include a class with intensive support by a literacy professional, a group meeting in a community organization facilitated by providers such as job counselors, health care workers, etc., or self-directed, home-based learning settings with informal assistance from family and friends. As of fall 1999, enough PBS stations will carry TV411 to reach half of all US households. During its pilot year, ALMA partnered with four cities and two states to distribute TV411 video and print to more than 200 community partners, including both literacy and non-literacy organizations. Such organizations are ALMA "hubs" and their staffs receive training in how to use TV411 materials to offer literacy support within the context of their work. Taken together, the situation-based content of TV411, its familiar television format, and ALMA's community partners embed literacy acquisition in a range of everyday activities and settings. We envision our materials being used at the point of literacy challenge, when literacy looms as an obstacle to something an adult needs or wants to do, such as complete an application, read a lease, apply for a job, compose a letter, or read to children. Use may take the form of modeling, after a learner sees someone address this challenge in a parallel situation on the show. Alternatively, a literacy helper may use our print materials to provide practice within a context of scaffolding and support in a local clinic or in a government office where many forms must be deciphered and filled out.

> *TV411's curriculum...is based on extensive research with adult learners and practitioners concerning both the skills and contexts most relevant to the target audience. Three themes —parenting, money and health— emerged from this work as critical to adult learners and to the literacy challenges they face.*

How TV411 is being used

TV411 has been adapted to an array of settings, lending itself to use in regularly scheduled class or in highly individualized fashion.

Examples include:

- A Welfare to Work Program in the South Bronx where literacy classes alternate with work experience. TV411 enlivens classroom discussions in the post-lunch lull and supports resumé writing and job seeking skills.
- A Brooklyn Drop-in Center for adults seeking computer skill and job counseling uses it whenever the opportunity arises.
- South Seattle Community College and other sites are creating local wrap arounds and offering TV411 as a distance learning class.
- Libraries are circulating videos to borrowers.
- Some hubs have created simple sign-in sheets to make it easy for learners to take videos home. For example, at a reemployment training center in Pittsburgh and a Seattle workplace, workers attending basic skills classes can borrow videos and use then with TV411 In Print at home.
- TV411 tapes are being run in a large public hospital in New York, in a New York City councilwoman's office, in Goodwill stores in Pittsburgh, and in a workforce development office in El Paso.
- TV411 materials are used by a Pittsburgh health education center that fosters partnerships in prevention and operates a neighborhood peacemaker program.
- and more...

Some research findings on the pilot year

Based on preliminary findings of ALMA's documentation research, TV411 materials are primarily used in the following settings: adult education and literacy programs (40); family literacy, such as Even and Head Start programs and K-12 parenting programs (26); libraries (22); welfare to work, job training, union, labor-management joint funds and workplace programs (20); multiservice community-based organizations (17); health settings, such as clinics and hospitals (12); corrections, including work release programs, detention centers, and prisons (5); housing projects or homeless shelters (5). Classification is approximate because many hubs house a number of different kinds of programs and some are using TV411 in literacy programs within other kinds of institutions. Responses to a survey question that asked hub staff to indicate what populations their organizations serve resulted in the following numbers: The general public (142 hubs); adult learners (120); workers (21) and other populations (35). Hub research further indicates that TV411 is being used in a range of service activities with youth, parents, ex-offenders, dislocated workers, homeless individuals and public assistance recipients.

[The authors acknowledge the difficulty of documenting the impact of some of the non-traditional uses of TV411, but describe how the evaluators are trying to address the difficulty. They conclude with some implications for the field.]

Implications for adult education practice and policy

Early data from TV411's pilot phase supports ALMA's goals of expanding the capacity of communities to support adult learning and of reaching and teaching more adult learners. The pilot study exploring the impact of TV411 materials on learners indicates that the materials increase the frequency and variety of literacy practices and promotes attitudes and beliefs that encourage lifelong learning. Findings from hub research in non-educational settings suggest that training, technical assistance and relevant materials can foster new acquisition contexts for adult learners. However, organizational staffing and resources, as well as the assistance that ALMA can provide, directly affect the extent to which TV411 is used, including the ability to create authentic opportunities for engaging in literacy practices. This is especially the case with organizations whose mission is other than education, such as hospitals. Technology enables the extension of literacy education beyond the classroom and into homes and communities, but only if formulas for funding and evaluating literacy services recognize and support less formal acquisition contexts. Truly contextualizing literacy in such settings requires that policymakers, practitioners, and interested community partners reconceptualize funding, accountability, and outcome measures. ALMA's experience thus far contributes to this re-thinking. We hope to continue to learn from TV411 users how best to support adults in and out of classrooms as they strive for membership in the literate community.

> *Technology enables the extension of literacy education beyond the classroom and into homes and communities, but only if formulas for funding and evaluating literacy services recognize and support less formal acquisition contexts. Truly contextualizing literacy in such settings requires that policymakers, practitioners, and interested community partners reconceptualize funding, accountability, and outcome measures.*

New York City and TV411

Number of hubs: 84
Number surveyed: 57

Of those contacted, thirty-one (54%) are organizations whose main purpose is not education. They include two hospitals, three dislocated worker one-stop centers, eight homeless shelters or drop-in centers, eleven programs providing services to parents, one to youth in the K-12 system, and a tenants' association.

Providers in these non-educational hubs cite the life skills content and moving stories of adult learners as the features of TV411 that facilitates its use with their participants.

Source: D'amico and Donnelly

Maura Donnelly can be reached at mdonnelly@edc.org

The Centre for Literacy has TV411 videos that can be borrowed.

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Parents, children and media— The role of adults mediating children's TV viewing

Excerpts from a presentation by Sophia Wu, Associate Professor, College of Communication, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan.

[Professor Wu argues that children are not as media savvy as we sometimes assume, and that with new media saturating the globe, media education is more critical than ever before. She sees an important role for parents which is not currently being fulfilled based on evidence from her research. Ed.]

The following discussion is based on two separate but related studies that I conducted in Taiwan from 1993 to the present. One, conducted in 1994, entitled "An Investigative Study on Children's TV Literacy" included 937 children in Grades 4 - 6. The other was a two-year ethnographic study which observed 32 families for 4 days per year from 1996-1998; it was entitled "Exploring the Social Practice of Children's TV Viewing — Contextual Analysis and Meaning Construction."

My findings indicated that:

- More viewing does not increase TV literacy. The amount of viewing was irrelevant to children's TV schema level. Watching more TV did not lead to more TV knowledge.

- Cognitive development plays an important role in determining the level of children's TV knowledge.

- One of the most influential predictors of TV literacy was age. It seems that those at a higher stage of cognitive development have a better ability to decode TV messages. When young children consume adult fare, they do not necessarily understand it just because they are heavy viewers.

- Children demonstrate sufficient knowledge in decoding formal convention of TV production such as shots, cuts, and special effects.

-It's just too hard not to listen to TV— It's spent more time raising us than you [parents] have.
-Bart Simpson to Homer.

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- Children are less competent in understanding the denotative meaning of TV content and even less in understanding the connotation of TV messages.

Children's media habits at the end of the 1990s -- Some recent US findings

(Media include: TV, VCR, CD and audio cassette player, radio, video game player, computer, Internet, print)

- Children aged 2 to 7 spend a little more than 3 hours per day watching TV and videos; 45 minutes reading (20 minutes on books, 16 minutes on magazines, 5 minutes on newspapers).
- Children aged 8 to 13 spend about 7 hours per day on all media.
- 69% of US households with children aged 2 to 18 own a computer; the children spend on average 40 minutes per day in front of the computer screen with games and/or on the Internet.
- Children watch more general entertainment than children's programming
  Children's information programs are watched most frequently by 3 to 5 year-olds.
  9 to 12 year-olds watch these programs only 30 minutes per week.
- On average, in a mid-sized US city, there are about 1000 children's programs broadcast per week, of which 25% target preschoolers. The other 75% are viewed by older children who watch only about 30 minutes per week of these shows.

US children are watching a substantial amount of adult TV fare.

[Sources: Kids and Media at the New Millennium, Kaiser Foundation, November 1999; Children's Use of Electronic Media: A National Survey, publisher n.a.]

Presented by Sophia Wu

- In general, children have greater trouble in decoding the persuasive intent of messages, social stereotyping, media ecology or political ideology.

I would like to modify the notion that children learn from watching TV; what they learn depends on what they watch. There are other variables in the process of consuming images. Based on the qualitative data from the observation of the 32 Taiwanese families, I would argue for a fuller picture of how media affects the child audience. From my observations, I found that:

- Reverse modelling is very common, especially for children who watch TV frequently. This does not mean the children understand better than their parents do; however, they present themselves as the informed and sometimes control information flow. For example, a child who is more familiar with pop music than the parents will more likely be the information-giver in the co-viewing context.

- A child co-views with an adult only about one-third of the time. Active co-viewing means that the adult is making an effort to co-view with the child, which is, in general, not common. (US data indicate only 5 minutes of adult-child co-viewing per day.)

- The social hierarchy of viewing reflects a variety of factors, including who has the remote control, who occupies the best viewing seat, and who is the information provider during viewing. Another factor is how frequently a child obeys parental intervention.

- Communicating with TV content is an ongoing process for many children. They either talk to a TV program while viewing it alone, or discuss it with siblings, particularly when watching cartoons. More often, they extend the topic from TV and make it meaningful in another context.

- Co-viewing with adults, mainly parents, is quite different than with siblings. Adults usually do not react to children's questions and tend to give "quick" answers if they do make an effort.

No matter what type of media children encounter today or in the future, they are likely to decode messages based on their developmental stage, personal experiences, and the viewing context in which they are engaged. Children are less likely to self-teach or to see through and behind the screen of manipulation without being taugh or told. The complexity of globalization of children's programming and the profit-making and popular culture behind such market-driven forces are hard to understand even for adults. New media suggest a new concept of treating young audiences as a market; such an issue is way beyond children's comprehension.

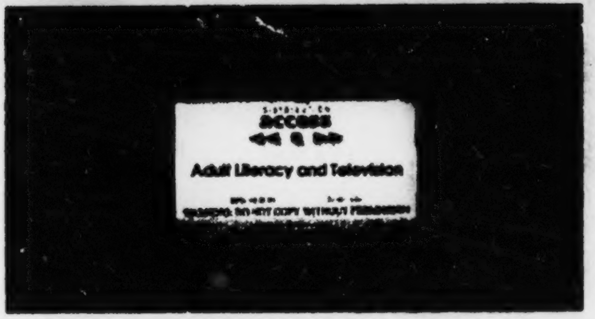
Sophia Wu can be reached at tjwu@nccu.edu.tw

NOW AVAILABLE: Adult Literacy and Television Set of 5 videos

Produced by Canadian Learning Television

Adult Literacy and Television: A Colloquium hosted by Daniel Richler

These five 30-minute videos capture the lively debate among participants at the 2000 Summer Institute on Adult Literacy and Television.



Can TV motivate? Can TV teach? Do national campaigns work? The roles of class, race, gender, ethnicity in literacy debates; what volunteers can/should do, definitions of literacy; media literacy for adults; students as producers as well as consumers of media; and more. The segments can serve as excellent discussion-starters for professional development sessions and for policy forums.

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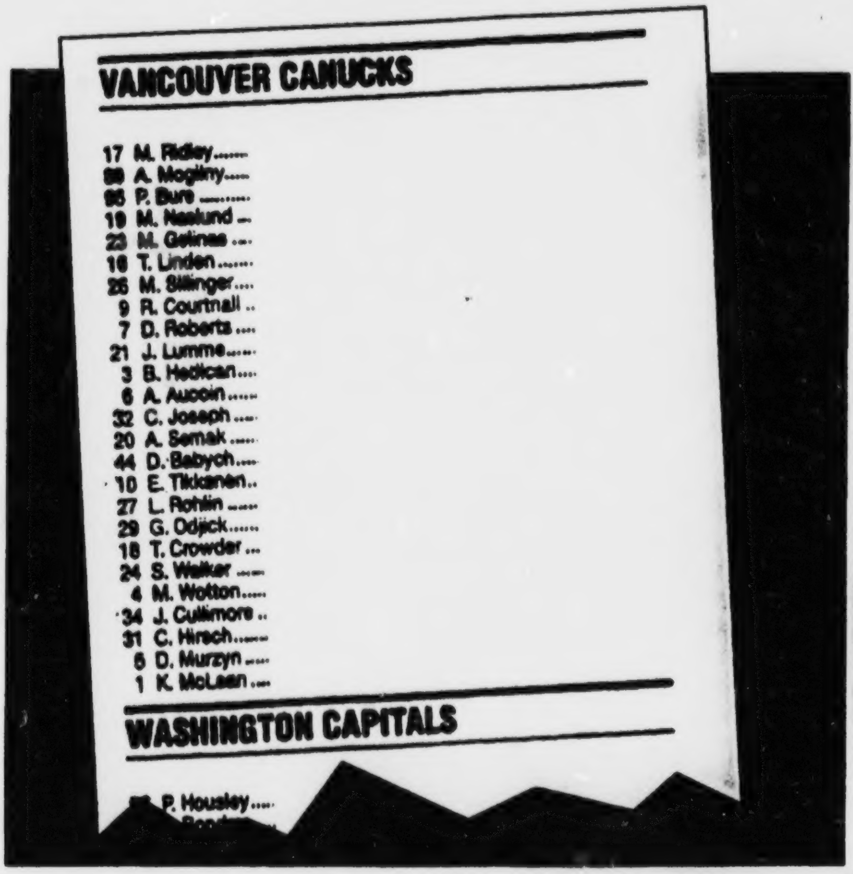
Repurposing at the grassroots: Learning numbers from *Hockey Night in Canada*

by Mona Arsenault, Tutor
Montreal

What was the problem?
One of my former students was severely intellectually disabled and had very little understanding of numbers or letters, but a keen interest in learning. I worked with him for about three years and discovered several other skills and activities in which he delighted; copying anything he saw was a favourite. One day I asked him if he watched TV, and he mentioned that he had his own TV and that he liked to audio tape the sound of the hockey games from both the TV and the radio onto his cassette player. So, I started from this interest and pursued every idea or possibility I could think of. In the end we achieved a great deal of success and enjoyment.



VANCOUVER CANUCKS

17 M. Ridley......
89 A. Mogilny.....
96 P. Bure ....
19 M. Naslund ..
23 M. Gelinas ...
16 T. Linden ......
26 M. Sillinger....
9 R. Courtnall ..
7 D. Roberts ....
21 J. Lumme.....
3 B. Hedican....
6 A. Aucoin .....
32 C. Joseph ....
20 A. Semak .....
44 D. Babych....
10 E. Tikkanen..
27 L. Rohlin .....
29 G. Odjick......
18 T. Crowder ...
24 S. Walker ....
4 M. Wotton.....
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31 C. Hirsch......
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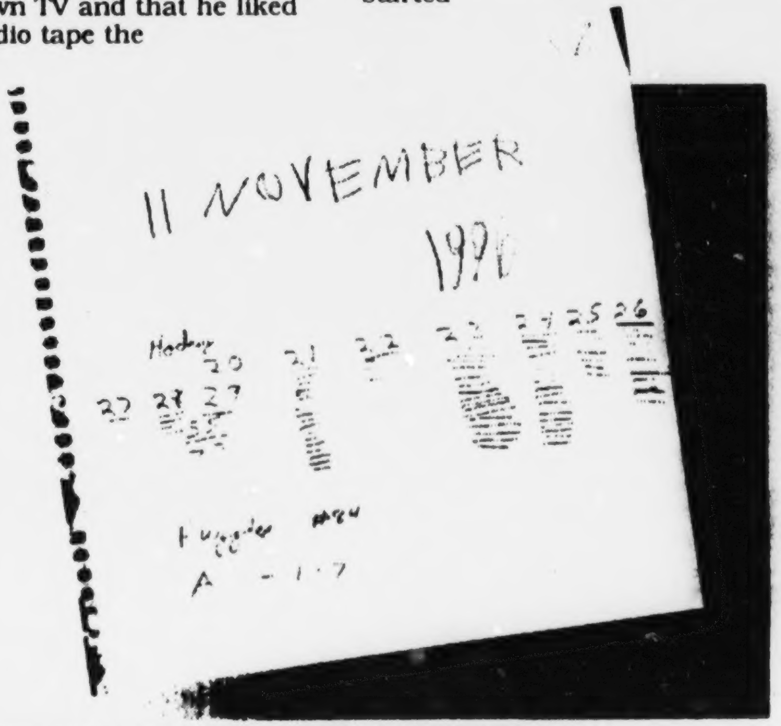
1 K. McLean ....

WASHINGTON CAPITALS

P. Housley....



11 NOVEMBER
1996

Hockey 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
32 27 27

A - 1 · 7

What did we do?
I began by looking at TV writing in the form of commercials, news, sports, and educational programming. I discovered a world of words, if the student wants to look for them.

I started with a home-made video tape of a hockey game. When the student came to class we looked at the numbers on the players' backs. I pointed out to him when the same players skated in front. Then, I paused the VCR and had him copy the number onto a large sheet prepared with lines ready for him to write on. For homework I asked him to fill in the rest of the sheet from the following hockey game. As

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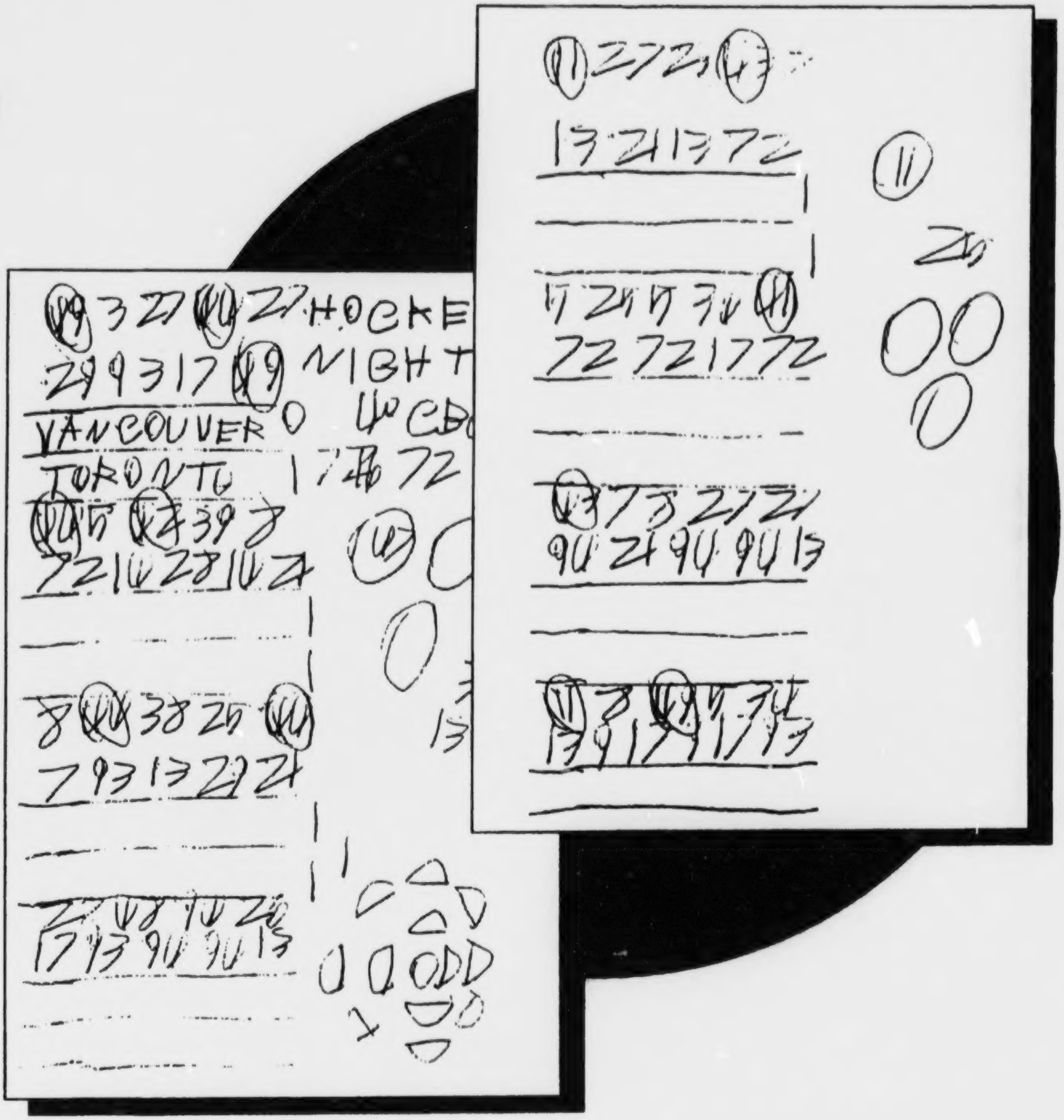


well, I made arrangements with the family to be sure he would be prepared, and to have a table and pencil ready at the scheduled time and be tuned to the correct channel.

He came back the following week excited that he now knew numbers. We matched his worksheet with the video tape, recited the numbers, and checked for scores which came up occasionally in the left-hand corner of the screen. After several weeks he began to catch on to "double digits" and we laughed each time he said "99."

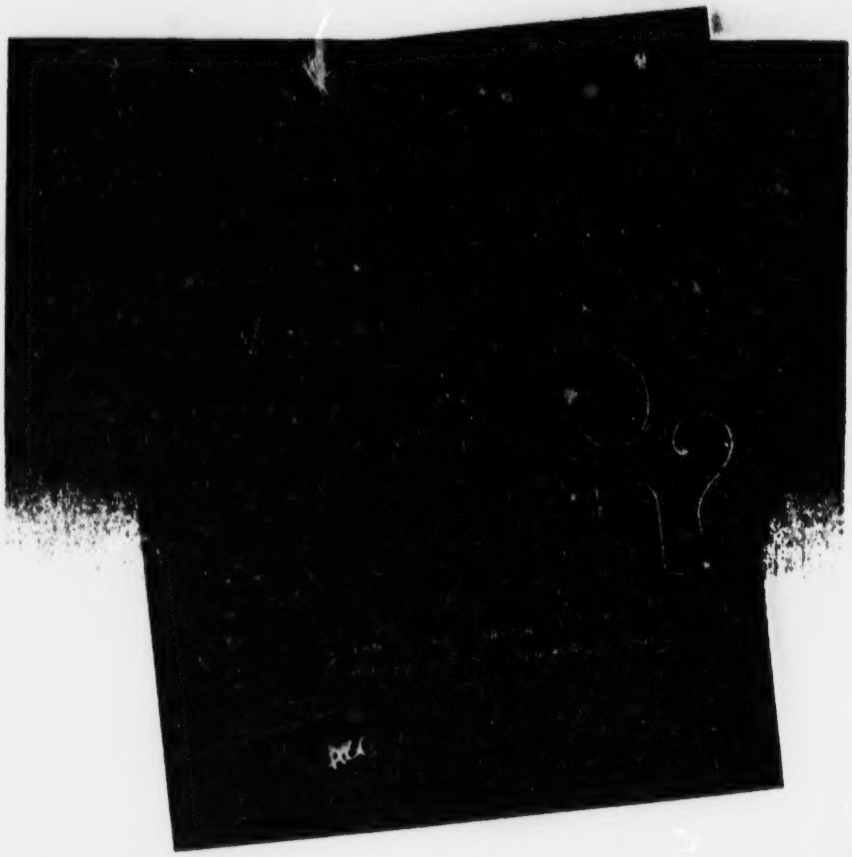
He learned numbers, displayed quick recognition of symbols, letters, copied detailed logos with accuracy, and eventually even the abbreviations of team names. As we sat and corrected his work, he kept repeating how he was reading and counting like everyone else.

Mona Arsenault can be reached at mona@aei.ca

Who wants to learn?

Data from groups working with the LEARN campaign

Excerpt from "Executive Summary, (pages 4 and 5) of *Who wants to learn? Patterns of Participation in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs*, the summary of Results from a National Study conducted by ABC CANADA in partnership with Literacy BC. With permission.



Who is seeking literacy and upgrading education?

Patterns of Participation interviewed more than 300 people who were seeking information about literacy and upgrading education across Canada (with the exception of French Canada and the Yukon).

- More than 80 percent identify English as their language of greatest fluency.
- Nearly half are employed.
- Nearly a quarter are receiving some form of social assistance.
- Close to half of potential learners live in households with annual incomes of less than $20,000 a year.

A number of barriers to literacy

The Patterns of Participation study identified a wide array of factors that stand in the way of increasing literacy skills among Canadian adults.

Program/policy-related factors

- 43 percent of callers don't enrol because of program/policy-related problems such as not being called back by a program contact person, long waiting lists, inconvenient course times, wrong content or teaching structure, and unhelpful program contact.
- Of those who enrol but drop out, more than a quarter identify program/policy-related factors as the main reason for leaving programs. These factors include wrong program level, content or teaching structure and program cancellation.

Socioeconomic-circumstantial factors

- 30 percent of those who do not enrol cite socioeconomic-circumstantial factors as the main barrier.
- Almost half of those who do not enrol in literacy or upgrading programs cite money problems as a contributing factor for not enrolling.
- Of those with children, more than 40 percent of women and close to 20 percent of men cite childcare conflicts as a factor in their decision not to enrol.
- Women are more likely to cite socioeconomic-circumstantial factors than men, reflecting women's lower incomes and higher degree of responsibility for childcare.
- Socioeconomic-circumstantial factors are an even larger problem in dropping out of programs. 56 percent of those who drop out cite reasons such as job-related conflicts and family responsibilities, especially childcare.

Cognitive-emotive factors

- Contrary to popular understanding, cognitive-emotive reasons such as fear are least likely (15 percent) to be cited as the main factor for not enrolling. Older callers and those with lower levels of formal education are the most likely to cite cognitive-emotive reasons as contributing factors.

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- A relatively low proportion of learners (6 percent) offer cognitive-emotive factors as their main reason for leaving a program, although worry or nervousness about being in a program is a contributing factor for more than a quarter of those who drop out.

Problem is systemic

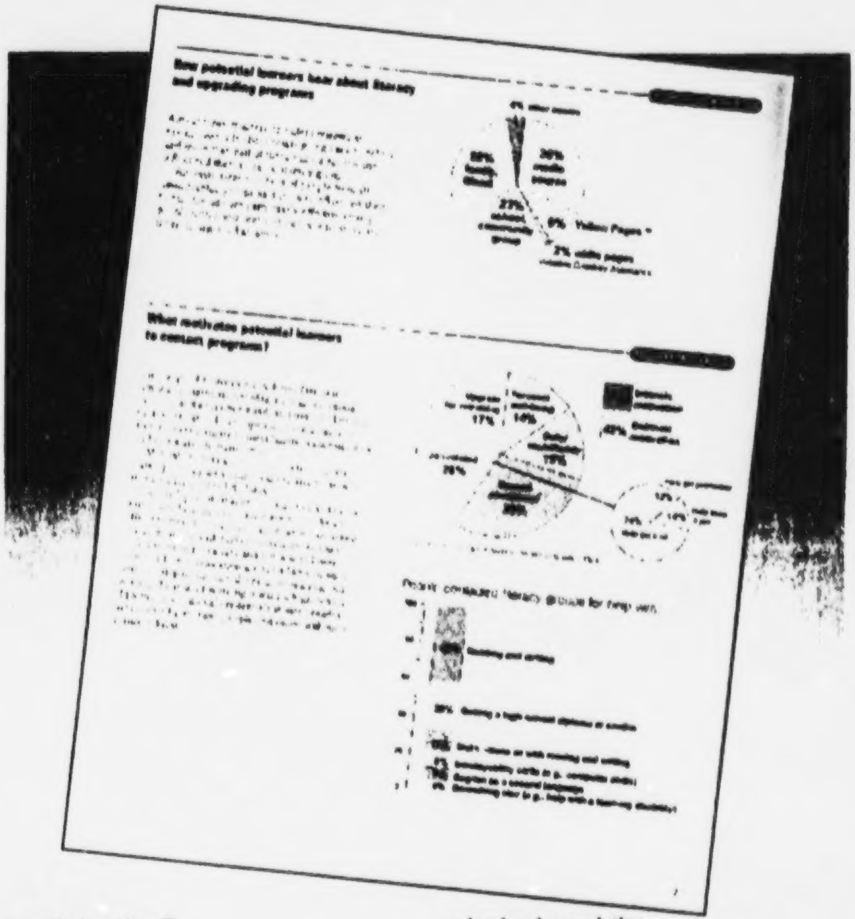
In addition to the underlying problems of poverty, childcare issues and job conflicts, there are dramatic regional variations in models of funding and service delivery across Canada that make it difficult to provide quality programs and service. Of the groups and programs who participated in this study:

- More than a third have no full-time staff.
- More than two-thirds have one or less full-time staff.
- Close to 40 percent are open less than 35 hours per week.
- 57 percent close for more than four weeks per year.
- High numbers use volunteers to cover critical teaching and referral work.
- Half do not provide special training for staff or volunteers who do referrals.

What it will take to solve the problem

Given the small fraction of people with low literacy skills who actually contact programs and all the socioeconomic-circumstantial difficulties they must overcome to do so, it is nothing short of tragic when they are told that they are not able to enrol because of policy- or program-related barriers.

But what will it take to change the picture of Canadian literacy and upgrading programs from one of low enrolment, high dropout, and precarious participation?



Certainly, it is tempting to direct individual literacy organizations to revamp their approach or slash their waiting lists; but without increased program funding and significant infrastructural change, that may not be possible.

Some of the problems facing literacy education in Canada can be alleviated by immediate action and increased funding. Most solutions, however, require longer-term strategies, which include moving away from our current patchwork of assorted programs and services, toward a genuine system for adult basic education.

[This study did not include the experiences of the 90 –95 % of people with low literacy who have not participated in any literacy or upgrading. It only looked at people who had used the LEARN line which is not the only means of recruiting learners in the country. Ed.]

[The Summary ends with ten top recommendations for policy-makers and for the field. Ed.]

Ellen Long, one of the co-researchers, presented some preliminary findings from this study at the Summer Institute. Ellen can be reached at elong@interlog.com

The data were collected in 1999. The document was printed in October 2000.

For more information on the LEARN campaign and on this research, visit the ABC CANADA web site: www.abc-canada.org

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Adult Literacy and Television:
Selections from the Annotated Bibliography

Lallez, R. Canada: Experiment in adult education. *Literacy Work*, (1974). 3 (3) 29-60.

Annotation:
This article is an abridged version of R. Lallez's findings drawn from an experiment in adult education and multimedia held in the Saguenay/Lac St-Jean region, Quebec, Canada. At the time, Saguenay/Lac St-Jean region had 150,000 inhabitants. The experiment used television as its mainstay (hence TEVEC, a modified acronym and a mnemonic for its name) and involved 80,000 people who had seven years of schooling or less. The basic aim of the project was to provide the participants with the equivalent of the nine years schooling necessary for them to participate in vocational training. The project is described from its pre-inception; simultaneous assessment accompanies observations of its progress. The TEVEC operation furthers discussion about the theory and strategy of innovation, and the design and execution of a multimedia system on a wider scale.

Keywords:
CANADA, TEVEC,VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, COMMUNITY LITERACY, NEW TECHNOLOGIES, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Ryan, J.W. Literacy and Adult Education: Uses of Television and Radio in Two Developed Countries. *Literacy Work*, (1975). 4 (5-6), 57-73.

Annotation:
The uses of television and radio in two developed countries are reviewed by authors from the United States and Britain. The United States review (by Dr. John W. Ryan, Director of the International Institute for Adult Literacy Methods) tackles the problem of recruitment in literacy and adult education programs. The information is based on a report prepared by Mark Rossman (College of Education, Arizona University), entitled Problems of Recruitment in Literacy and Adult Education Programmes. Recruitment was undertaken via radio & television advertisements and printed graphics. These materials attempted to convey information about adult basic programs in the city of Springfield, MA, and to engender positive attitudes towards such problems. The Massachusetts experiment illustrated both the potential and requirements of electronic media in recruiting adult basic education participants -- it was stressed that the presentation should be direct and simple and should convey a positive image of a learning setting in which adults can feel comfortable and not have their sense of dignity threatened. The United Kingdom review is based on the BBC television program, *On the Move*, which is now in its second year. The article is based on extracts from the BBC Adult Literacy Handbook which explains some of the initiative behind the television programme "On the Move" and the BBC Adult Literacy Campaign.

Keywords:
UK, USA, BBC, ON THE MOVE, RADIO, EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES, ADULT LITERACY PROJECTS, LITERACY PROMOTION, RECRUITMENT, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS, NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Bunger, M. Two American Studies on Literacy Through Television: Operation Alphabet in Florida*. *Literacy Discussion*, (1970). 1 (3), 129-142.

Annotation:
In 1960, there were approximately 260 000 adults, 25 years old and over, classified as illiterate or functionally illiterate, as well as many thousands of others in the 18-25 bracket. As a result of these findings, a statewide concentrated literacy campaign using Operation Alphabet telecasts, was launched in Florida in 1963. This article relates the history of the campaign, the purpose of the study, describes Operation Alphabet, and evaluates some of the instructional procedures used. This article runs alongside Neil Peerson's article, "Two American Studies in Literacy Through Television: A Televised Experiment in Alabama".

*The official title of the study is A descriptive study of Operation Alphabet in Florida and an evaluation of certain procedures employed. The study was sponsored by the Florida Sate University. This is a summary of the research.

Keywords:
USA, OPERATION ALPHABET, LAUBACH METHOD, NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Strommen, E. Television Catches its Second Wave: Classroom TV and Video Evolve from Passive Instruments to Interactive Tools. *Electronic Learning*, (1995). 15 (3), 30-39.

Annotation:
Computers have been the focus of most discussions about teaching and learning as interactivity becomes the buzz word in education. As multimedia, the Internet and CD ROMs made their debut in educational settings, television seemed destined to certain demise as a tool for education. To the surprise of many, there is now a growing trend towards instructional television. The key to TV's successful comeback is changing the way it is used in the classroom. Television can be used towards interactivity by following up viewed material with oral discussions, research and written projects. TV should be used as a viewing medium for concepts that are not adequately conveyed with the written word. Media criticism courses are helping students and teachers understand the semantics and power of television, video production and visual imagery to better use TV as an interactive, critical tool in their education. (Includes related articles on media literacy resources, using TV in adult literacy.)

Keywords:
USA, VIDEO, VISUAL LITERACY, DISTANCE EDUCATION, NEW TECHNOLOGIES, MEDIA LITERACY, CRITICAL THINKING, ADULT EDUCATION

Mehler, A. The Potential of Captioned Television for Adult Learners. Working Papers of Planning and Development Research - *Working Paper* 88-3. Toronto, ON: TVOntario. (1988).

Annotation:
With the assistance of the Canadian Captioning Development Agency, TVOntario has undertaken to determine the efficacy of applying closed-captioned television to the needs of adult learners who are not hearing impaired. In this research study, actual and potential applications of closed-captioned television for hearing audiences in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia were explored in order to provide a context to guide development in this area. Following a description of captioning technology and a discussion of the current commitment of Canadian broadcasters to captioned television, the report provides a review of experimental research studies that tested the use of closed-captioned television with adult students of English as a Second Language and literacy, as well as with learning disabled adults. The results of these studies are discussed in terms of their implications for the development of captioned television for adult learners in Ontario. Issues are raised concerning the learning contexts that are best suited to learning with closed captions, and suggestions are made as to the types of programs and captioning methods that are most conducive to learning. The paper concludes with recommendations for the next phase of research--to conduct a pilot test of the use of captioned video in various classroom learning contexts and with learners of varying capabilities.

Keywords:
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, CANADA, USA, UK, EUROPE, AUSTRALIA, TVONTARIO, CLOSED-CAPTIONED TELEVISION, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL), LEARNING DISABLITIES, ADULT EDUCATION, NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Marchilonis, B. A., & Niebuhr, H. *Television Technologies in Combating Illiteracy. A Monograph*. San Francisco, CA: Far West Lab for Educational Research and Development. (1985).

Annotation:
Responding to a need indicated by President Reagan's 1983 Initiative on Adult Literacy, this monograph considers the past, present, and future uses of television technology in literacy programs. Recognizing the amount of time Americans spend viewing television and the new possibilities for service delivery offered by such technological developments as cable TV, videocassettes, and videodiscs, the document presents a classification scheme of literacy levels, examines literacy programming of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, and describes the British Broadcasting Corporation's pioneering outreach programs. Advantages and disadvantages of TV as an instructional medium are considered, as well as the potential audience; kinds of programming at federal, state, and local levels; new applications of existing programs; and the use of innovative technologies to reach adult illiterates. The authors conclude with a moderate view of electronic media as part of an ecology of learning, and stress the need for engaging leadership to meet the literacy challenge, perhaps in the spirit of campaign or competition that motivates other areas of American life. An appendix provides a comprehensive list of literacy television programs, including titles, descriptions, and information on availability. References are also listed.

Keywords:
USA, UK, BBC, VIDEO, PROGRAM EVALUATION, NEW TECHNOLOGIES, NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Sumner, H. BBC Education: The Effectiveness and Evaluation of Educational Broadcasting. *Journal of Educational Television*, (1991). 17 (3), 159-72.

Annotation:
This paper discusses formative and summative evaluation techniques used by BBC Education in the United Kingdom to assess the effectiveness of educational broadcasts for various ages. Two case studies are included: a research project, commissioned by the BBC and the Independent Television Association and carried out by the Broadcasting Research Unit, that investigated the use of educational television in primary and secondary schools; and a Basic Skills Initiative based on a partnership between the Training Agency, the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) and BBC Education which focused on adult literacy programmes.

Keywords:
UK, BBC, ITV, ALBSU, ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, SECONDARY EDUCATION, PROGRAM EVALUATION, DISTANCE EDUCATION, RADIO, MEDIA LITERACY, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS, NATIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

Adult Education Section; Nova Scotia Dept. of Education. *Think TV: A Guide to Managing TV in the Home*. Halifax: Nova Scotia Department of Education (2000). 284

Annotation:
This manual accompanies a workshop program called ThinkTV and is based on the idea that television can be used to develop important literacy and life skills, including critical thinking. ThinkTV combines strategies from the two related fields of critical thinking education and media literacy education. The manual contains a facilitator's manual and a series of five workshops (three core and two optional workshops) to help parents manage television in the home. Participants in the three core workshops learn how to think critically about television and how to gain some control over TV use in the home, focusing on time spent watching TV and program content. They are taught how to use television to support their children's learning in the classroom. The two optional workshops explore the language of television and the language of advertising. The former provides participants with opportunities to develop their analytical skills and apply them to television production techniques. The latter explores the commercial purpose of television and its impacts on programs and viewers.

Keywords:
CANADA, EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, CRITICAL THIINKING, MEDIA LITERACY, PROGRAM EVALUAITON, ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The full Bibliography can be downloaded from our web site: www.nald.ca/litcent .htm, under publications

It can be ordered in print format for $10 (includes GST/PST, shipping and handling) from The Centre for Literacy.

Television to stimulate discussion and writing—
Stills and clips: Looking and seeing

The excerpts below are reproduced directly or adapted from *Television Talk and Writing: Practical ideas for literacy and language work with adults*, by Jane Lawrence and Jane Mace. Cambridge UK: National Extension College, 1991, [113 pp.] With permission.

Background: Linking literacy and TV

This book for teachers and tutors suggests that adult education teachers can link literacy and television in two ways:

1.) Use broadcast television as a subject for study. This can be done in two ways:

- As a group in the classroom: Using the viewing experience of the group, with video clips as memory prompts, students can discuss and share their ideas on television, and use some of the texts...in "Read and Discuss" [a section of the book] to move beyond their own experience to other perspectives.
- At home or elsewhere: Between class meetings, students can use class discussion to reread their television, looking out for particular features, or agreeing to record (on video, or in notes) some themes or ideas that have interested them.

2.) Get in the habit of "quoting" from television. This can be done by using the video recorder and playing short clips—in all literacy and language work, and in any class discussion on a particular topic, alongside extracts from print media. (11-12)

Student research

This book stresses research by students into their learning and experience. A lot of the suggestions emphasize the oral which means listening to, and voicing, ideas and opinions, and making the effort to relate an individual's account to a collective picture. The book offers material for structured discussion, not for individual written worksheets. This discussion...draws from, and leads back to, the work of expressing ideas in writing.(12)

> *While television is usually taken to be a visual medium, and looking and seeing are central to actually watching it, few of us get much opportunity to look closely at what we are seeing.*

There are three main groups of research methods:
1.) Recollecting and recording (using log sheets): noting what they see as they see it; noting how they watch.
2.) Interviewing another person (questionnaire): about what they watch and what they think.
3.) Reviewing and classifying (charts): classifying images, programmes and kinds of viewing and broadcasting activity. (13)

Stills and clips: Looking and seeing

While television is usually taken to be a visual medium, and looking and seeing are central to actually watching it, few of us get much opportunity to look closely at what we are seeing. It all happens very quickly. We sometimes see what is not there; sometimes we don't see what is there. "Seeing is believing," we say. Believing may sometimes mean one person seeing, in the same moving pictures, more, less, or different things from what another sees in them. This is as true for watching television as it is for any other kind of looking and seeing.

Using both still pictures and clips of moving pictures provides a means of slowing down the process of looking, so that it is possible to notice in detail what we see. Once this kind of noticing has been done, it is easier to sort out what is in the picture from what each of us brings to it from our own experience... The point is, the visual images on television usually pass so quickly that we cannot always be sure of what we have seen.

* In Canada, copyright law prohibits taping off-air for classroom use. But through appropriate requests, teachers can often obtain permission especially from public broadcasters. The Think TV Manual (Resources p.36) provides a copyright guide for TV use.

** Lawrence and Mace provide detailed instructions on how to make each of these three types of clips.

Television Talk and Writing: Practical ideas for literacy and language work with adults is currently out of print. A copy may be borrowed from The Centre.

IN THE CLASSROOM: TELEVISION TO STIMULATE

STILLS

What do you see in the picture?

What you need

a selection of still photographs cut from TV listings [guides]. As these are often small, it can be useful to paste them on larger squares of paper to make them easier to handle and pass around.

What to do

Divide students into pairs. Give each a picture, with the following directions:

Don't show your picture to your partner.

1.) Take turns to describe your picture as exactly as you can. The person listening should ask questions in order to get as clear an idea as possible of what is in the picture. The main rule is to stick to what is in the picture; even if you recognize the program it comes from, try not to say so. This is not a "guess the program" exercise. When the first person has finished, it is the second person's turn.

2.) After you have both described your pictures, show them to each other. Compare what you see with what you imagined from the description.

3.) Then talk about what kind of program you think each picture comes from. Ask yourselves: What is there in the picture which leads you to know that it is, for instance, a game show rather than a news program?

Preparation notes

1.) Pictures can be a random selection from one issue of a TV guide. Or you could select pictures from particular types of program, such as soaps or documentaries. (This will take more preparation than a random selection; you'll need more than one week's listings to get a good range of pictures.)

2.) The exercise depends on you having introduced the idea of different kinds of program. You could ask the group to **brainstorm. There is no "right" answer.** For example, one group came up with this list: sport, entertainment, consumer advice, comedy, cartoons, children's programmes, education and leisure, quiz/game shows. If the list is on a board, flip chart or overhead, the pairs can use it to compare with their findings when you come together again as a group.

CLIPS

What do you see on the screen?

What you need

a videotape of five or six short extracts from a random selection of programs

What to do

With the sound turned off, show the tape to the group, with these directions: Watch without talking. Try to notice everything you see, so that you will be able to retell it in your group.

Now group people into pairs, threes or fours, making sure that each group has one person willing to [record] what people say. Their job is to try to recall, together, what they remember seeing. Like the stills exercise, emphasize that this is not a guessing game about television programs. The aim is to try to recapture everything on the screen in each of the fragments. Different people will recall different things.

Invite everyone to regather and replay the tape of the clips. This time, use the pause button to freeze the shot once during each clip, so that everyone has a chance to look carefully at the picture. Everyone can call out what they spotted and remembered, and notice what they didn't.

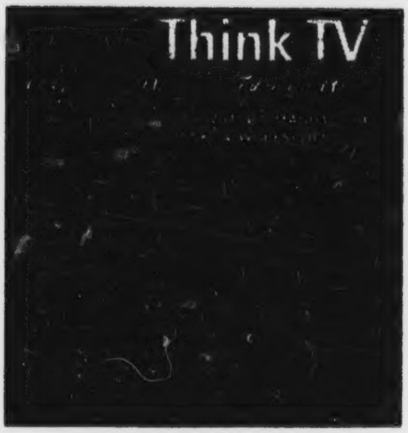
The issues that will emerge from this include:

- how much we are able to remember apparently fleeting images.
- how different people will remember different details, and how this may be influenced by our own interests, moods and social experience.
- what we don't remember — perhaps because it wasn't important, or perhaps because there is so much to take in that we have to leave something out in the recollection, perhaps for other reasons.

Preparation notes

We have used three methods** to make the clips tape. The first is the "simple clip"— simply record a few minutes from one program. The second is what could be called the "random zap" method, which results in a glimpse of four things that happen to be on, more or less at the same time, across four channels. The third could be called the "pick and mix" method, which is the result of a more detailed search for a particular range of program. The central point is this: any example of television programming can stimulate useful discussion if it's clear that there is value in every student' s contribution, and out of five minutes of watching, there is at least 35 minutes of good work to be done.

Television to support school: Parents managing children's viewing



Excerpts from *Think TV: A Guide to Managing TV in the Home*, produced by the Nova Scotia Department of Education, Halifax, NS. 2000. With permission.

See Resources (p. 36) for details about this manual.

This manual is divided into five training workshops for facilitators who will then train parents and educators in how to develop media literacy in the home and use television critically. The materials have been designed to be easily used by parents at an ABE-level of education. The hand-outs reprinted here are from Workshop 3: Using TV to Support School Success. They are both samples of the many activities that can engage children in critical enjoyable viewing.

HANDOUT 3.7• TV Game: Kid Critics

Kids can design their own ratings system to keep track of different episodes of a favourite series or movies. This will help them make critical decisions about each program. They can compare their ratings with other family members or friends. This is a good way to stimulate discussion about programs.

Since so many programs are repeated, viewers can use their ratings system to help them decide if they want to watch an episode again or not.

Here are sample rating systems:

***** = very good
*** = OK
** = so-so
* = not good

A = best
B = better
C = good
D = no good

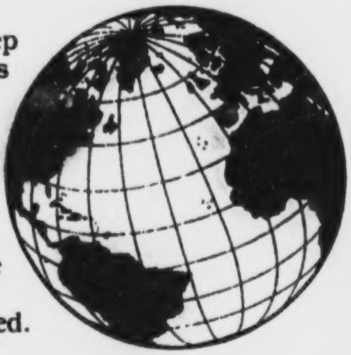
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
awful				okay					great

A sample rating sheet:

SERIES TITLE	EPISODE# OR TITLE	DATE SCREENED	RATING & COMMENTS

HANDOUT 3.10 • TV Game: TV Geography

Keep a globe, a wall map of the world, or an atlas near the TV. When places are shown on television, help children find them on the map, globe, or atlas. Keep track of how often certain places are shown over a period of time. Make lists of important places that you rarely see and try to find programs that show them.



Use this map, globe, or atlas to keep track of children's interests such as natural disasters, wars, dinosaur bone discoveries, etc. Encourage children to look for programs that are set in favourite or unusual places.

Many programs are set in no-name cities or locations. It can be fun to guess the real place they were filmed. Watch the credits at the end of the program for clues about where the programs were filmed.

REVIEWS

Reading the Museum – a video

Exploring how museums can be an inspiration and resource for adult literacy, this video challenges our ways of seeing both literacy students and museums. Focusing on three successful demonstration projects undertaken across Canada by the Canadian Museums Association in partnership with local museums, the video portrays adult literacy students thoughtfully and with respect. Students speak openly and poignantly about the challenges of becoming literate; each one is presented as an individual with family and community bonds. They all have strong perceptions about themselves and their lives. Patricia, Gail, Helen, Claude, and the others look like our friends, neighbours and relatives, far removed from the stereotype of the non-functional adult literacy student so often represented in the media.

Then there are the museums. Whether the Edmonton Art Gallery (working with Prospects Literacy Association), the McCord Museum in Montreal (working with Carrefour Education Populaire de Pointe St. Charles), or the New Brunswick Museum (working with Read Saint John), all are shown as welcoming places where basic education students can find a way to connect. Using paintings,

sculpture, and artifacts, literacy instructors collaborated with museum educators to support innovative projects adapted to the philosophy of the literacy program. So, the popular education group in Montreal used photocopies of historic family photo albums from the McCord collection to stimulate reading and writing, then took the students to the museum to look through original artifacts. Finally, the project linked back to social issues in their own neighbourhood by asking the students to create albums of their own. They show off their creations with pride.

In the end, each project produced materials and publications that are used and admired by others, bolstering the self-esteem of the learners and contributing to their collective learning. The commentary points out links between images and print, between art and writing, and demonstrates how art triggered recognition, self-reflection and identification that lead to some stunningly sensitive writing. The viewer is moved when Julie, a student who created a storybook about the Saint John Fine Arts Gallery finds herself not yet able to read her own words fluently, yet smiles as she affirms, "These are my words. I've done it. I can't read it very well. It takes time, and that's what I have."

> *A way of seeing is a way of not seeing*
>
> — *Kenneth Burke.*

All teachers should find this video worth watching and modeling. [LS]

Available in English, narrated by poet Dennis Lee, and in French, narrated by children's book illustrator and playwright Marie-Louise Gay, the video is available for $29.95 plus $6.00 postage and handling. Add $5.00 extra for US deliveries.
Taxes extra.

TO ORDER:

Phone toll-free
1-800-221-4443
(9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., E.S.T.)
Please have your credit card at hand.

Fax
1-613-824-1167
Complete order form and fax to the 24 Hour Fax Line.
Credit card orders only.

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Chronological Conference Listing

Local

Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec (LDAQ) 26th Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities
March 22 -24, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information: LDAQ.
Tel.: (514) 847-1324
Fax: (514) 281-5187
Web site: www.aqeta.qc.ca
E-mail: aqeta@sympatico.ca

Literacy Partners of Quebec COGNET (Cognitive Enrichment Network) Training
4-Day Workshop
March 28 - 31, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information: (514) 369-7962

Blue Metropolis Literary Festival
April 11-15, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information: 2100 Guy St., #106, Montreal, QC, H3H 2M8
Tel: (514) 932-1112
Fax: (514) 932-1148
Web site: www.blue-met-bleu.com
E-mail:
josee.matte@Blue-met-bleu.com

ATEQ: Springboards 2001 Annual Conference of the Association of Teachers of English of Quebec (ATEQ)
April 20, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information:
Fax: (514) 398-4529

National/International

BETT: The Educational Technology Show
January 10-13, 2001
London, UK
Information: 020 7537 4997
E-mail: amanda@besanet.org.uk
Web site: www.bettshow.com

Learning Disabilities Association 2001 International Conference
February 7-10, 2001
New York, NY
Information: Tel: (412) 341-1515
Fax: (412) 344-0224
Web site: www.LDAAmerica.org/conf/

National Reading Recovery Conference
February 10-13, 2001
Columbus, OH
Information:
Tel: (614) 292-7111 ext 7
Web site:www.readingrecovery.org

Integrating the Arts with Literacy: The Power to Promote Learning
February 22, 2001
Santa Rosa, CA
Information: Tel: (888) 792-2904
Fax: (812) 339-0018
Web site: www.pdkintl.org

Ontario Council of Teachers of English; Annual Winter Conference
February 23, 2001
Toronto, ON
Information: (416) 393-5501
Fax: (416) 393-5631
E-mail: tiki@accglobal.net

TESOL 2001
February 27, 2001
Saint Louis, MO
Information: (703) 836-0774
Fax: (703) 836-7864
E-mail info@tesol.org
Web site: www.tesol.edu

Conference on College Composition and Communication (4Cs)
March 14 - 16, 2001
Denver, CO
Information: NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096
Tel: (217) 328-3870, ext. 203
Fax: (217) 328-0977
Web site: www.ncte.org

10th Annual National Conference on Family Literacy
March 18 - 20, 2001
Dallas, Texas
Information:
Tel. (502) 584-1133
Web site: www.famlit.org

CSUN Sixteenth Annual Conference on Technology and Persons with Disabilities
March 19 - 24, 2001
Los Angeles, CA
Information: (818) 677-2578
Fax: (818) 677-4929
E-mail: ltm@csun.edu
Web site: www.csun.edu/cod/

The Education Show
March 22 - 24, 2001
Birmingham, UK
Information: 0870 751 1549
Web site: www.education net.co.uk

Third World Summit on Media for Children
March 23 - 26, 2001
Thessaloniki, Greece
Information:
E-mail: summit@cmd.gr
Web site: www.3rd-ws.org

Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference 2001
March 30 - April 4, 2001
Memphis, TN
Information: Ron Martin
E-mail: martinro1@biomand.net
Web site:
http://206.82.75.28/conf.html

82nd Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association
April 10, 2001
Seattle, WA
Information:
Tel: (202) 223-9485
Fax: (202) 775-1824
Web site: www.aera.net

CONFERENCES

British Dyslexia Association (BDA) International Conference
Dyslexia: At the Dawn of the New Century
April 18 - 21, 2001
University of York, UK
Information: BDA, 98 London Rd, Reading, Berkshire, RG15AU
Tel: 0118-966-2677
Fax: 0118-935-1927
E-mail:
info@dyslexia-bda.demon.co.uk
Web site: www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

International Reading Association (IRA) 46th Annual Convention
April 29 - May 4, 2001
New Orleans, LA
Information:
Tel.: (302) 731-1600, ext. 216
Toll free: (800) 336-READ
Fax: (302) 731-1057
E-mail: conferences@reading.org
Website: www.reading.org

Ontario Literacy Coalition:
Courage to Learn
May 10 - 12, 2001
Toronto, ON
Information: Ontario Literacy Coalition, 365 Bloor St. East, Suite 1003, Toronto, ON M4W 3L4
Fax: (416) 963-8102

Laubach Literacy of Canada's 2001 Biennial Conference
May 17 - 20, 2001
Charlottetown, PEI
Information: Tel: (888) 248-2898
Fax: (506) 634-0944
Web site: www.laubach.ca

Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education: 20th Annual National Conference
May 23 - 29, 2001
Quebec City, Quebec, Canada
Information:
Web site:
www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2001
E-mail: casae@vax2.concordia.ca

Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities
May 23 - 30, 2001
Quebec City,QC
Information: Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, 151 Slater St., #415, Ottawa,ON, K1P 5H3
Tel.: (613) 238-6112, ext. 312
Web site: www.hssfc.ca

Writing, Teaching and Learning in New Contexts Fifth National Writing Across the Curriculum Conference
May 31 - June 2, 2001
Bloomington, Indiana
Information: Tel: (812) 855-4928
Web site: www.indiana.edu/~wac2001
E-mail: wac2001@indiana.edu

Computers and Advanced Technology in Education (CATE) '01
June 27 - 29, 2001
Banff, AB
Information: IASTED Secreteriat, #80 4500 16th Ave. N.W., Calgary, AB, Canada, T3B 0M6
Tel: (403)-288-1195
E-mail: calgary@iasted.com
Web site: www.iasted.com

IAIMTE 2001 Third International Conference Theory and Practice in the Teaching and Learning of Language and Literature
July 11 - 13, 2001
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Information:
E-mail: Braaksma@ilo.uva.nl
Web site:
www.ilo.uva.nl/projecten/iaimte

13th International Conference on Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
September 27 - 29, 2001
Halifax, NS, Canada
Information: Tel: (902) 423-2850
Web site: www.nsnet.org/ldans/2001
E-mail: ldans@ns.sympatico.ca

Workplace Learning: Challenges and Opportunities Sixth Annual Conference
December 2, 2001
Chicago, Illinois
Information: Workplace Learning Conference, Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1025 West Johnson Street, Room 964,Madison, WI, USA 53706-1796;
Fax: (608) 262-3050.
Web site: www.cew.wisc.edu/workplace

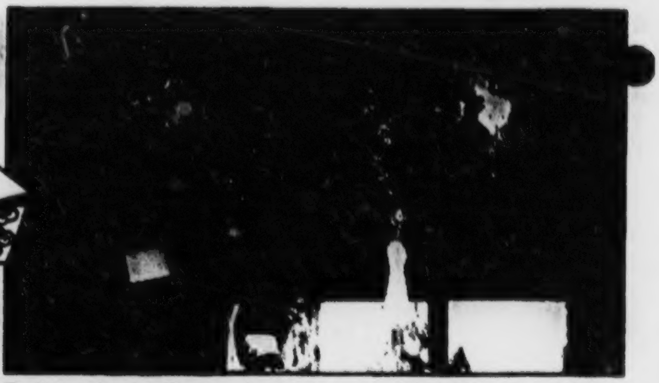
Modern Language Association (MLA)
December, 27 - 30, 2001
New Orleans, LA
Information: MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789
Tel.: (646) 576-5000
Fax: (646) 458-0030
Web site: www.mla.org

Summer Institutes

Summer Institute 2001 The Centre for Literacy in collaboration with the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
Adult Literacy, Technology, and Learning Disabilities
June 28 - 30, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information:
Tel: 514-931-8731, ext. 1415
Fax: 514-931-5181
E-mail:
literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca
Web site: www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Canadian National Storysacks Project funded by The Millennium Bureau

Jan Greer facilitating Montreal Storysacks workshop.

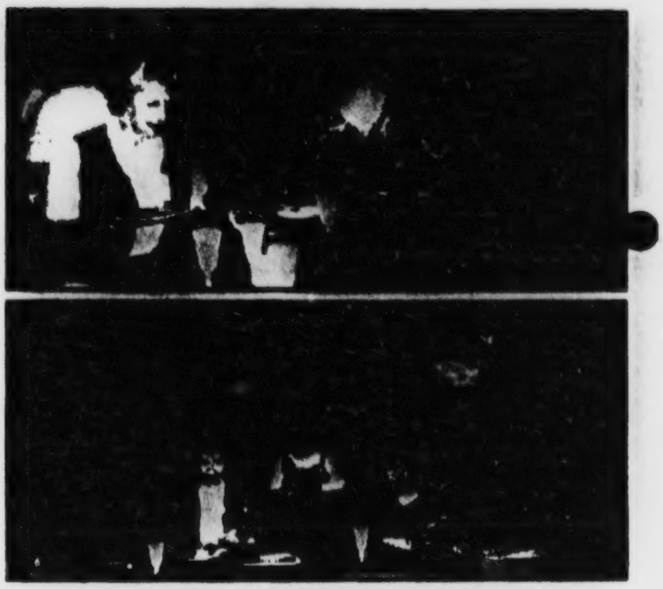


Participants at a Storysacks Workshop in Montreal at The Centre for Literacy facilitated by Jan Greer in November 1999. Jan, Executive-Director of the New Brunswick Committee on Literacy, introduced Storysacks in Canada by bringing Neil Griffiths to New Brunswick to offer 14 workshops in May 1999.

2000
Canada

The Millennium Bureau of Canada has signed a contribution agreement with The Centre for Literacy to create a Canadian National Storysacks project in partnership with three other literacy organizations, each of which will manage one region of the country. The New Brunswick Coalition for Literacy will coordinate the Atlantic region; Literacy Partners of Manitoba will coordinate the West; the Northwest Territories Literacy Council will oversee a pilot-project in Yellowknife as a model for the North. The Centre for Literacy will coordinate Quebec and Ontario.

The Storysacks concept began in the **UK several years ago** with elementary school principal Neil Griffiths who conceived the idea as a way of encouraging early excitement about reading among young children and engaging parents (including those who did not read very well themselves) in helping their children become readers. It has become a national hit there, patronized by Princess Anne, and is currently managed through the Basic Skills Agency as an Early Literacy Initiative. Storysacks was brought to New Brunswick in May 1999 by Jan Greer, Executive Director of the N.B. Coalition, with funding from the National Literacy Secretariat. Jan later facilitated workshops in Montreal in November 1999.



A Storysacks workshop in the UK facilitated by the creator and Director of the National Storysacks Project, Neil Griffiths, for more than 100 teachers and community workers on the outskirts of London in January 2000.

Now, with permission from the UK (where the concept has been copyrighted worldwide), the four partners are creating an early literacy project built around Canadian children's literature which reflects the regional and cultural identities of communities across the country. Our goal is to create 8000 storysacks over the next year.

For more information see the website: www.storysacks.nald.ca or; send a message to the National Coordinator Joan MacKeigan at storysacksinfo@sympatico.ca

Media literacy in adult basic education

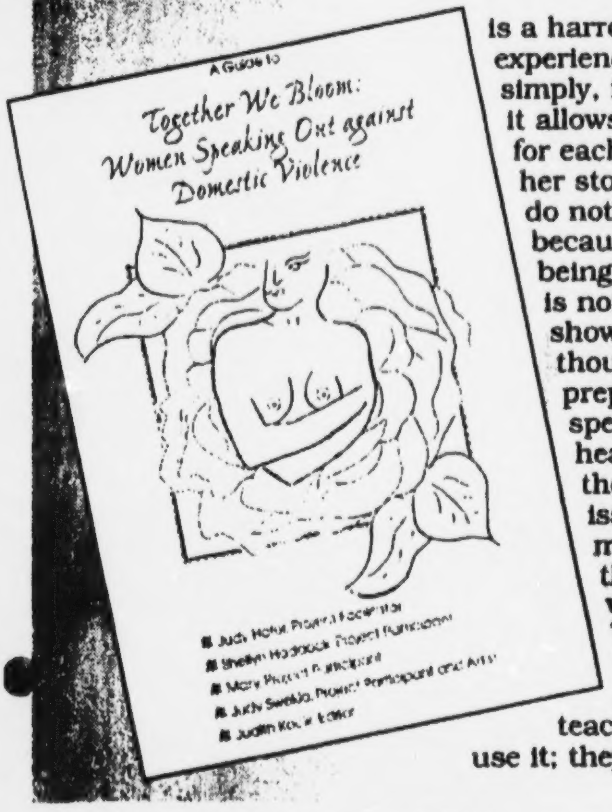
Always in the forefront of ABE practice, the Massachusetts adult education community is among a small number of providers who make the connection between ABE and media literacy across the curriculum. In many of the state programs, students not only examine television critically, but learn about the process by becoming video producers. The Spring 1999 issue of *Bright Ideas* (Volume 8, Number 4) highlights media projects carried out in ABE programs and offers guides for teachers.

BRIGHT IDEAS

Together We Bloom: A Video Project on Domestic Violence

One of these projects explicitly connects literacy, media and health. *Together We Bloom*, a video, described below, was created by a group of women in a Massachusetts ABE class who discovered after several months of learning together that they had all been affected by domestic violence and wanted to explore their experiences and support each other. The video took almost a year to make, with heavy emotional investment on the part of the instructor and the students; they were given some professional training on video production by local cable TV staff. *Together We Bloom* was screened at the First International Conference on Health and Literacy in Ottawa (see p. 4).

Together We Bloom



A Guide to

Together We Bloom: Women Speaking Out against Domestic Violence

- Judy Hofer, Project Facilitator
- Shellyn Haddock, Project Participant
- Mary [illegible], Project Participant
- Judy [illegible], Project Participant and Artist
- Judith [illegible], Editor

is a harrowing viewing experience. Filmed simply, in a talking circle, it allows time and space for each woman to tell her story. Two women do not show their faces because they are still being threatened. This is not a video to be shown without thought and preparation, but it speaks from the heart and cuts to the heart of an issue that touches more ABE students than many of us want to admit. The producers have written a guide for teachers who want to use it; they advise that access to counselling be made available for viewers. Subscriptions to the quarterly *Bright Ideas* cost US $8.00 outside Massachusetts. Contact: Catherine Santiago, *Bright Ideas*, 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Make cheque or money order payable to World Education.

Together We Bloom: Women Speaking Out Against Domestic Violence, video and guide can be ordered for US $29.95 from Laubach Literacy Action, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210, Tel.: 1-800-448-8878.

The Centre for Literacy has a copy that can be borrowed with agreement that the guide will be followed. Call Meg Sinclair, (514) 931-8731, ext. 1415.

The Centre for [illegible]
& Dawson College

WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS 2000-2001

SUMMARY OF 2000/2001 WORKSHOP PROGRAM

- **Nova Scotia Tutor and Instructor Training and Certification Program**
  Dates: February 7 - 10, 2001

This program is a totally revised version of the acclaimed training program developed almost a decade ago.

It provides instructors and tutors with knowledge and tools to teach adult basic students reading, writing, numeracy, and applied skills for everyday living.

- **Grassroots: Writing in the Community**
  Date: April 11 - 12, 2001
- **Strategies for Teaching Literacy to Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities**
  Date: April 30, 2001

How, when, and under what conditions do individuals with severe dyslexia develop high level literacy skills? What research-based teaching strategies and hands-on activities can be used effectively in today's classrooms? This interactive workshop will explore these questions in an activities-based format.

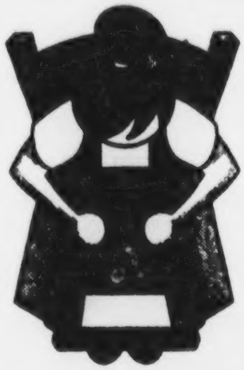
- **Assessment of Adult Reading**
  Date: May 14, 2001

This workshop will introduce the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA), recently developed by the University of Alberta. CARA, which contains graded passages with readability levels ranging from grades 1 to 12, can be used for placement and/or diagnosis in college and community-based programs. This tool has the potential to become a key accountability measure for student progress as it measures gains in grade level and use of strategies.

- **Storysacks, or Literacy in a Bag**
  Dates to be announced throughout 2001

For information:
The Centre for Literacy of Quebec
3040 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec, H3Z 1A4

Tel: (514) 931-8731, local 1415
Fax: (514) 931-5181
E-mail: literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca
Web-site: http://www.nald.ca/litcent.htm



M Ed On line

The M.Ed. in Adult Education through Penn State's World Campus (its virtual campus) is now one year old. The program consists of 24 credits online with the option to transfer in 9 credits of electives. (The World Campus already offers a variety of programs, including a certificate in Educational Technology, that can be transferred into the Adult Education masters degree program.) The master's degree integrates distance education and international adult education into the coursework, with the option to explore other areas of interest such as literacy.

Information:
World Campus web site
www.worldcampus.psu.edu.
Click on Programs and then on Adult Education.

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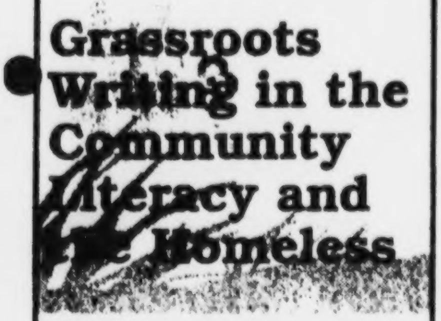


Grassroots Writing in the Community Literacy and the Homeless

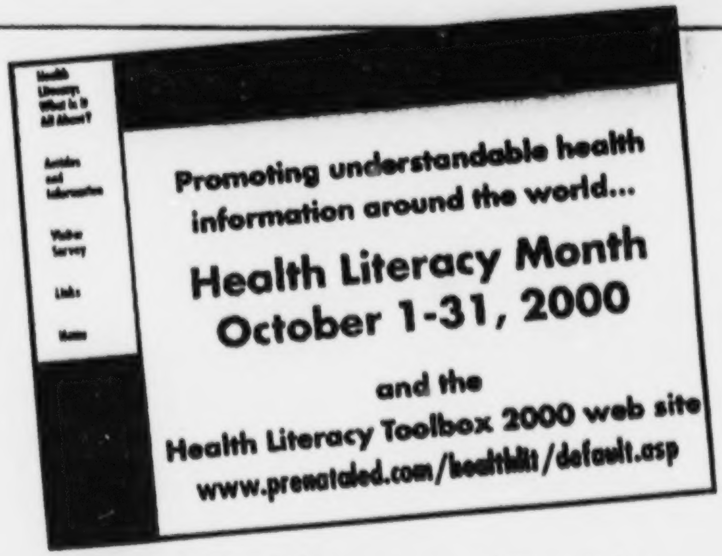
April 11-12, 2001

Workshop

Wednesday, April 11
5:30 - 9:30

Thursday, April 12,
afternoon

In collaboration with Blue Metropolis Literary Festival This event will feature readings by writers who produce and sell newspapers and other publications by and for the homeless in cities across Canada.



Promoting understandable health information around the world...

Health Literacy Month
October 1-31, 2000

and the
Health Literacy Toolbox 2000 web site
www.prenataled.com/healthlit/default.asp

Health Literacy Month

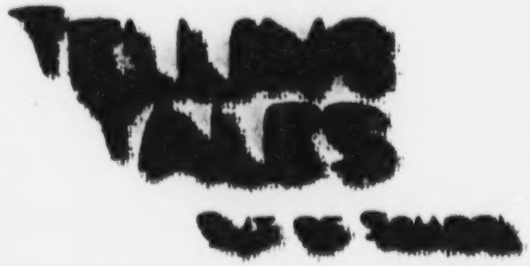
October 1- 31, 2000

October was designated Health Literacy Month by a coalition of US literacy and health care providers who have created a Health Literacy Toolbox to help professionals create understandable health information around the world. To view the Toolbox and find out how to promote awareness in your community, go to www.prenataled.com/health/default.asp

Book your calendar now for Daniel Richler speaking on The Word, a new television network built entirely around books and slated to air in Fall 2001.

Thursday, April 19
8:00 -9:30
Place to be announced

Springboards
2001



Keynote speaker:
Eleanor Wachtel,
host of CBC's
"Writers and Company"

Friday, April 20, 2001
McGill University, Faculty of Education

Registration forms available in January

Information: Fax (514) 398-4539

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec
In collaboration with The Learning
Disabilities Association of [illegible]

SUMMER INSTITUTE 200

Today and tomorrow

June [illegible] - [illegible], [illegible]

How many adults with literacy problems have some type of LD?
Spend three days with practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers from Canada, the US and the UK moving beyond the controversies to identify what we do know about adult literacy and LD, what technologies may be able to offer in addressing the need, and what new needs are created by some of the very same technologies

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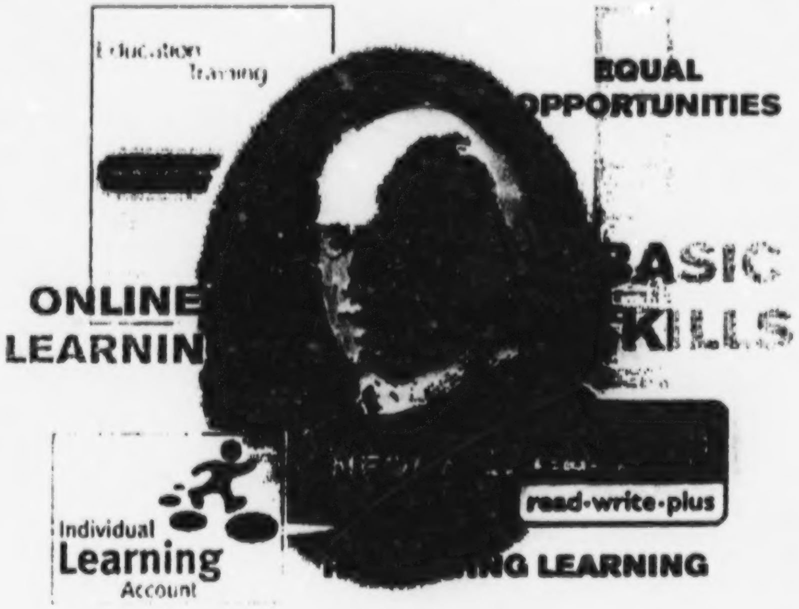
● LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUMEDIA FOCUS

Volume 15 • Number 2

Connecting literacy, media and technology in the schools, community and workplace

The politics of literacy policy



The Speech from the Throne in January 2001 has given Canadians hope that we may finally see an adult literacy policy that meets the needs of our complicated country. As organizations and groups across Canada participate in federal consultations, and attempt to build common ground, we have the benefit of learning from other industrialized nations that are at various stages of national policy creation.

The British have set the pace internationally. Launching "Skills for Life," their national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills, the Labour government has created a cabinet Committee and named a Minister for Lifelong Learning with specific responsibility for basic skills. They have also created a new Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit in the Departmment for Education and Employment (DfEE) to oversee implementation. Building on recommendations from a 1999 blue-ribbon commission headed by Sir Claus Moser, (see p.10), the government has addressed every aspect of adult basic skills provision and services, supported over extended time with unprecedented funding allocations. They propose to spend £241 million in 2000-01. £313 million in 2001-02; £366 million in 2002-03 and £403 million in 2003-04. Included in the strategy are provisions for a national campaign and outreach, learning opportunities in many sites, ICT and mixed media delivery, priority target groups, core curriculum, teacher recruitment and training, quality control, research and monitoring. They have given equal weight to literacy and numeracy and emphasized ICT skills, calling the initiative read•write•plus.

Overall, they have positioned basic skills as part of lifelong learning for adults, a concept much talked about but not widely practiced, and are coordinating the strategy with other policies addressing social inclusion for the neediest segments of their society.

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THE CENTRE FOR LITERACY • MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The first 750,000 people targeted by 2004 include various set numbers from the following groups: jobseekers, other benefit claimants, prisoners and parolees, public sector employees, adults in low-skilled jobs, young people, general basic skills learners (including those on learndirect), refugees and speakers of other languages, parents, and people who live in disadvantaged communities.

Before implementing the strategy, the government engaged in a lengthy consultation process with key stakeholders, building support and consensus. In one of the final consultations in January 2001 the DfEE brought together ten foreigners to offer some outside perspectives before the final draft of the policy was completed and to share some models of good practice from their countries in pedagogy, teacher training, materials development, and use of ICT that could be adapted to the UK. Invitees came from Canada, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and Belgium. I was privileged to be among them.

In trying to crystallize some Canadian strengths to share at the table, I focused on the diversity and richness of practice and materials development that reflect the regional, cultural and linguistics differences. I also noted the beginnings of communication and resource infrastructure, the growth in expertise and knowledge, and the strong partnership models that have been fostered. I took them on an electronic tour of some outstanding Canadian models. But it was impossible to avoid saying that we do not yet have a national policy and that our political structure with its jurisdictional divisions, and our history of regional loyalties complicates attempts to develop one. (A summary of my comments is available on The Centre's web site.)

In the coming months, I will describe the policies in some of these countries, and track progress both in the newsletter and on our web site. Considering differences as well as similarities between ourselves and other countries enlarges our thinking in this period of possibility.

This issue of *LACMF* begins by describing the evolution and some key features of the British strategy. Because the initiative is so recent, it is too early to comment on outcomes. I do note some of the challenges (p.14).

This issue also looks at some recent Canadian contributions to current policy discussions closer to home (p.4, p.41) and shows how policy can have impact on curriculum and professional development, using the example of outcomes-based Demonstrations On-Line in Ontario (pp.36-37). It highlights the new and contradictory interest in literacy of Canadian government communicators (pp.5-9). The remaining articles and reviews examine the impact of race, class and culture on literacy, and a range of participatory adult education practices. Excerpts from an international conference on Women and Literacy (pp.33-35) and a full insert on literacy and homelessness (pp.17-32) illustrate the complex interplay among literacy, personal development, and other social, economic and political factors. [LS]

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUMEDIA FOCUS

The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1A4
Editor: Linda Shohet • **Layout & design:** Ponctuation Grafix
• Dépot légal – 1991 • ISSN 1192-3288 • Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

The Centre for Literacy is committed to supporting and improving literacy practices in schools, community and workplace. It is dedicated to increasing public understanding of the changing definition of literacy in a complex society.

Literacy for the 21st century

Literacy encompasses a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. In a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text, in addition to alphabetic and number systems. These abilities vary in different social and cultural contexts according to need and demand. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes the reading and writing, critical understanding, and decision-making abilities they need in their community.

The Centre for Literacy acknowledges Dawson College and the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, for their support.

The opinions expressed in articles are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the philosophy or policy of The Centre for Literacy

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1

On literacy and slavery

Henry Allen Bullock notes that in the South, Hugh Bryan opened a Negro school in 1740, and that by 1755, schools for slaves were opened in Virginia. In general, however, while education opportunities for American children were available in the second half of the eighteenth century in the South, they were severely curtailed there in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As the Industrial Revolution called for greater supplies of cotton fiber, as the plantation system changed from a patriarchal to an economic base, and as the abolition movement gained ground and published greater numbers of documents, slave owners worried that education would encourage discontent among the slaves. So while community-based education in the slave quarter community and in churches was a powerful force, while some African American children in the South attended what were known as "night schools" (after white students left school, children of color would take their places, sometimes until ten at night), and while some children were taught to read and write by sympathetic slaveholders, many children were forbidden to attend school. A number of Southern states passed laws making illegal the school-based literacy education of people of color. Mississippi, for example, passed legislation forbidding the education of slaves or free Negroes in 1823; Louisiana forbade the teaching of slaves in 1830; North Carolina and Virginia, in 1831; and Alabama, in 1832. The North Carolina legislature explained its reason for the prohibition: "The teaching of slaves to read and write, has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion, to the manifest injury of the citizens of this State" (qtd. in Cohen 1622).

Lucille M. Schultz, *The Young Composers: Compositions' Beginnings in the Nineteenth Century*, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999, 18.

2

On competing views of technology and literacy

Two popular representations of technology currently contend for our national attention in explaining the increasingly strong links between computer technology and literacy that characterize our culture in the late-twentieth-century America: technology as a boon and technology as a burden. In the first representation, constructed by works such as McLuhan's *Gutenburg Galaxy* (1962), Negroponte's *Being Digital* (1995), Rheinold's *Virtual Community* (1994), and Hiltz and Turoff's *Networked Nation* (1993), computer-based communication environments are portrayed as progressive arenas for social exchange and involvement. In the second representation, described in works such as Stoll's *Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway* (1995); Sanders's *A Is for Ox: The Collapse of Literacy and the Rise of Violence in an Electronic Age* (1995), and Birkerts's *Gutenburg Elegies* (1994), computer-based environments for the practice of literacy are described as contributing to the decline of both reading and writing skills, as well as to individuals' inability to concentrate over sustained periods, the rise of violence, and the progressive social alienation of generations born after 1970. In these representations, both our fears and our hopes for technology are played out dramatically, if not always accurately, in terms of an oppositional relationship. The polemic constituted by the opposing visions, unfortunately, serves to distract us from more challenging social tasks: understanding the robust and far-reaching cultural relationships that support the technology-literacy link and recognizing the ways in which this link serves to exacerbate patterns of literacy based on race and poverty.

Cynthia L. Selfe, *Technology and Literacy in the Twenty-First Century, The Importance of Paying Attention*, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999, 26.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Learning technologies require educational leadership

I enjoyed your editorial "Reaching Learners Where They Are". You make some very pertinent comments. Your mention of the shifting away by educators by the mid-80's from television to computers reinforces my sense that education has treated each new technology in isolation, learned few lessons from each of them, and therefore has made the same mistakes, or has failed to take the next technology any further than the previous one. In particular I'm saddened by your statement that "so much knowledge has been shelved or lost." Saddened, because I believe it is the case and that we are all the poorer for it. There seems to be a wall or a barrier that we are unable to move beyond when it comes to technology for learning. We don't integrate into curriculum. We are seduced by the glamour of the technology and its process, by the power trip of creating content; and we sacrifice the connection to learning. I believe the same mistakes are being made with computers and digital media. We continue to place the bar high but don't engage the stewardship, the necessary leadership to take it on. Also there is limited endurance; we abandon quickly, going on to the next technology. The back of the class is littered with all these old pieces, last year's flavour of the month.

I believe that education failed television, not that television failed education. It remains a powerful tool, it should be central in the arsenal of technologies for learning, and there are new applications which continue to make it relevant. But it's as if it's passé, no longer relevant; if you try to use it you are marginalized, not because of what you may be doing but because you are no longer using something fashionable. That's why I say stewardship and leadership are somehow at the core of this dilemma. Those who make these choices do not have the critical knowledge to make good judgments. Education requires some new skill sets for its leadership.

Don Duprey
Learn Media, Toronto

Don Duprey is an independent producer. He has worked at TV Ontario and at the NFB. He was a participant at the 2000 Summer Institute.

How should Canadian literacy policy evolve? Current perspectives

The Movement for Canadian Literacy, one of the six national organizations that hosted last October's National Literacy Summit in Ottawa, commissioned researcher Sue Folinsbee to develop a Briefing Paper on Literacy and The Canadian Workforce, published in May. Combining the findings and recommendations from the Summit with interviews with ten leaders in the field of workplace literacy, Folinsbee has added a literature review to produce a thoughtful discussion paper. She draws on her own extensive experience in the field as a teacher, researcher and program director.

From all the data come five recommendations elaborated under the headings of

- **A** An adult learning vision and strategy for Canada
- **B** Principles and good practice
- **C** Public awareness
- **D** Partnership
- **E** Financial and resource commitment

Each is analyzed under the sub-headings of "opportunity," "challenges," and "recommended actions." Papers such as this are the beginnings of a process of building national consensus for a Canadian policy on adult basic skills.

Further details, and copies of the Paper:
www.literacy.ca

Corrections from Volume 15 Number 1

Report on Adult Literacy and Television
The e-mail address for David Hargreaves should be david_hargreaves@compuserve.com

On the list of participants at the 2000 Summer Institute, Francine Lee's name was not included. Ms. Lee, a lawyer and parent from Manitoba, who has organized TV Turn-Off Week in her province, gave a presentation at the Institute.

Her e-mail is:
bullsandbears@leeandlee.mb.ca

We apologize for the omission.

Canada Information Office

Government communication, literacy and citizenship

In September 2000, the Canada Information Office (CIO) released the findings from a study, entitled ***Issues and Challenges in Communicating with Less Literate Canadians****. They gathered data from over 4000 surveys, 8 discussion groups and 46 individual interviews with adults who had less than grade nine education. This group of citizens find most government documents too difficult, use television as a main source of information, distrust the Internet and want more human contact with officials. [See BOX]. The findings lead the CIO to host a one-day National Forum in November when 200 participants including government communicators, policy and program officers, met with literacy representatives from various organizations to develop a deeper understanding of the issue.*

In January 2001, the CIO, in collaboration with the Privy Council Office, organized a national Government Communicators Conference in Ottawa. They devoted a plenary session to the subject of Literacy and Government Communication. Sponsored by Canada Post, Linda Shohet gave this presentation to several hundred communicators from federal department offices across Canada. The conference was the first time in more than a decade that this group had met, and the registration of 500+ reflected strong interest and need. Organizers summarizing the two days pledged another conference in April 2002. Many presentations focused on sophisticated web-based communication strategies in an on-line world. In contrast were presentations on literacy and risk communication. All presentations were one hour long. Summaries from three of them capture some of the contradictions and challenges that face government communicators. [LS].

Characteristics of Less-educated Canadians: Summary of findings

Issues and Challenges in Communicating with Less Literate Canadians

General Considerations

- They are less optimistic, less self-confident and find change difficult.
- They are critical of government performance.

Information Needs

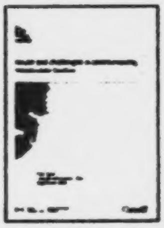
- They want to be informed, but are not always sure about what.
- They have the same priorities as other Canadians, that is, health care, education and unemployment, but they are not familiar with initiatives that have already been undertaken.
- They are more focused on day-to-day concerns and want information on matters that are important to their daily lives.

Perceptions relating to Government Communications

- They have greater difficulty understanding information and recognizing information sources.
- They are ambivalent about whether the information they receive meets their needs.
- They are uncertain about whether they can fully rely on the information provided.
- They contact the Government of Canada less frequently.
- They rely heavily on others to obtain information (relatives, friends, professionals).

Communications Vehicles

- They watch a lot of television (especially in the evenings) that is their main source of information.
- They are apprehensive about new developments in information technology, including the Internet.
- They want to be informed through government advertising, as much on television as in print.



(Source: *Issues and Challenges in Communicating with Less Literate Canadians*, Canada Information Office, 2000)

Available in print or CD-ROM (call 613-992-8545) and at www.cio-bic.gc.ca. The document also analyzed the weaknesses of current government communication practices and suggested alternative strategies.

What is the Canada Information Office?

The Canada Information Office (CIO) was established in 1996 to examine the effectiveness of government communications. Its mandate is to improve communications between the Government of Canada and Canadians. To help them achieve this goal, they have conducted public opinion research and analysis about government communications. The CIO works with other government departments and agencies, as well as with the private sector and non-governmental organizations, on initiatives to inform Canadians about Canada and the services available to them from the Government of Canada.

Risk Communication

Report and comments on a presentation by Vincent T. Covello, Director of the Center for Risk Communication at Columbia University and currently President of the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA). Covello gave a workshop at the CIO's January 2001 conference.

Anyone working in the field of literacy who listens to Vincent Covello will discover that, like Molière's bourgeois gentilhomme who recognizes that he has always been speaking "prose," we have been doing "risk communication" without knowing it.

Vincent Covello, internationally renowned as a writer and consultant on the topic, defines risk communication as communication about high concern issues that are sensitive or controversial. A relatively new and growing field that boasts over 8000 peer-reviewed articles, risk communication is increasingly demanded in a world of instant communication, media sound bites, rapid travel, environmental disasters, superbugs, and terrorism. While much of his experience has been in occupational and environmental medicine, Covello is now training people to negotiate with terrorists and kidnappers. For government communicators, he summarized a complex theoretical literature using clear language, humourous examples

Covello outlined four theories of risk communication, all of which need to be taken into account:

THEORY	**MAIN CLAIM**
Mental noise theory	Upset people have difficulty processing information. Processing (hearing, understanding remembering) can be reduced by 80%.
Risk perception theory	Perception = reality What determines perception is multi-faceted. Among 27 factors, the least important are empirical facts.
Trust determination theory	Upset people tend to be highly distrustful
Negative dominance theory	Upset people tend to assume the worst.

> *Risk perception theory*
>
> *Perception = reality*
>
> *What determines perception is multi-faceted. Among 27 factors, the least important are empirical facts.*
>
> – Vincent Covello

and strong visuals. He suggests communication strategies to respond to each of the theories. For example, to overcome limited processing, he counsels limiting the number of messages (three is the magic number, "the answer to everything."); limiting the time for the message; and repeating the message. He also noted that if a critic is perceived to be credible, a good communicator must respond. Those who believe that "facts" are on their side often do not prepare their messages well enough.

Two critical strategies involve non-verbal communication and visual communication. Covello referred to research by Dr. Paul Ekman at the University of California on non-verbal communication in situations of low trust and/or high concern. Ekman has found that non-verbal communication provides from 50 - 75% of message content, that it is noticed intensely by audiences, often interpreted negatively, and that it overrides verbal communication. Communicators need to practice the non-verbal skills, i.e. if they are telling the truth they need to look as if they are. Covello acknowledged that this strategy "is a double-edged ethical sword" since it can also be used by liars to spin messages and propaganda.

On the use of visuals, Covello recommends the work of Edward Tufte on Visual Explanations. Word pictures, visual analogies and metaphors, two-dimensional graphics all enhance a message, and make it memorable. Covello recommended that anyone exploring the subject use university sites where there is a credible research base.

As a concise introduction to the subject, Covello, in collaboration with Frederick W. Allen, Associate Director of the Office of Policy Analysis at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has written a pamphlet for the EPA entitled *Seven Cardinal Rules of Risk Communication*. While acknowledging that there are "no easy prescriptions for successful risk communication," Covello and Allen claim general agreement on seven cardinal rules that apply equally well to the public and private sectors. They also note that while these "may seem obvious, they are continually and consistently violated in practice." [See box]

From *Seven Cardinal Rules of Risk Communication*

From a pamphlet by Vincent T. Covello in collaboration with Frederick W. Allen, Associate Director of the Office of Policy Analysis at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With each of the seven rules, they offer some "points to consider." Here are a few:

- *The goal of risk communication in a democracy should be to produce an informed public that is involved, interested, reasonable, thoughtful, solution-oriented, and collaborative; it should not be to diffuse public concerns or replace action.*
- *There is no such entity as "the public;" instead, there are many publics, each with its own interests, needs, concerns, priorities, references, and organizations.*
- *Different risk communication goals, audience, and media require different risk communication strategies.*
- *Trust and credibility are difficult to obtain. Once lost, they are almost impossible to regain completely.*
- *Few things make risk communications more difficult than conflicts or public disagreements with other credible sources.*
- *The media are frequently more interested in politics than in risk; more interested in simplicity than in complexity; more interested in danger than in safety.*
- *Regardless of how well you communicate risk information, some people will not be satisfied.*
- *If people are sufficiently motivated, they are quite capable of understanding complex risk information even if they may not agree with you.*

Source: " Seven Cardinal Rules of Risk Communication." It is available at www.ci.sf.ca.us/puc/wqfs/risk.htm with an invitation to respond.

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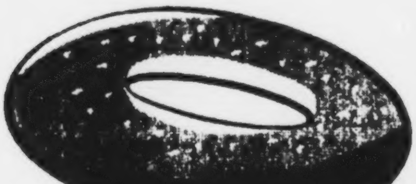

The Bagel Effect

Power and control moving from the centre

Report and comments on a presentation by Paul Hoffert, Director of CulTech Collaborative Research Centre, York University, Toronto, and Executive Director of Intercom ON.

Paul Hoffert is a mathematician, physicist, university professor, and entrepreneur, remembered by those old enough as the founder and keyboard player of the 1970s rock band Lighthouse. He currently directs a centre at York University studying the interplay of culture and technology. On his web site, he bills himself as a "Technology Visionary," a role he cultivates in his presentation.

Hoffert's talk was based on his 1998 book *The Bagel Effect - A Compass to Navigate the Wired World*, (McGraw-Hill Ryerson), an up-beat analysis of the wired world in which we often feel ourselves entangled today. The Bagel Effect is the term he has coined to describe a major trend in our world—that power and control are rapidly moving from the centre of systems to the edges, leaving a hole in the middle.

To communicate in this new world, Hoffert says that decision-makers must be on-line. Information itself will have no value when it is free on the internet. The value will lie in the management of knowledge. Right now, he says, we are doing a poor job. People need less information, but more pertinent information for their own purposes. Communicators are still using a 20th-century mass communication strategy in re-purposing print materials on-line. In the future, we will have to target clients with messages wrapped in relevant context, and give them only what they want, quickly.

Hoffert has high hopes for a future that lies not in a global village, but in local communities, which he argues can be restored through digital networking. The "global village" is a myth, he says. Who cares about billions of people? We know, on average, 1000 others: keep in touch with only 150, and trust only 20. In the 21st-century, he predicts that communications will allow us to combine physical and on-

WIRING COMMUNITY RENEWAL

Intercom Ontario – a $100,000,000 project

With $100,000,000 raised in 1995 through York University, IBM, and Bell, Hoffert masterminded the creation of "Intercom Ontario," a trial designed to create Canada's first totally wired community. From January 1997 to December 1998, Stonehaven West, a development in Newmarket, a suburb north of Toronto was connected by a high-speed local computer network – a private intranet accessible only to the neighbourhood. Eighty-five percent of the families purchased a subsidized computer and a digital camera. Once connected, they allowed their everyday activities to be monitored for two years, for academic research. According to the researchers, the findings showed that an old-fashioned sense of community was created. Neighbours knew one another, helped one another, shared neighbourly information, arranged childcare, and more. Many became friends, dropped in, put chairs on their front lawns, and organized impromptu barbecues and gatherings. Children collaborated on homework online. Hoffert calls Stonehaven a Habicon, a resurgent, bonded community made possible by cheap fibre-optic cable with its limitless bandwidth. Such infrastructure is increasingly being installed in cities throughout North America. Hoffert argues that in the future, local networking is going to become a basic utility like electricity and water.

Online communities, re-establish local support structures, and create friendlier neighbours and closer families. He used the example of an experiment carried out in Stonehaven, a suburb north of Toronto, to illustrate the promise. [See p.8 Wiring Community Renewal].

Despite the seductiveness of the vision and the outcomes from the Stonehaven experiment, it was hard not to imagine what other services and supports might have been provided for the $100,000,000 spent on the project.

In addition, would anyone have invested that amount to wire a working-class community? What assumptions about community and family underlie this vision? And what kinds of literacy are required to participate?

Accommodation: The other side of literacy

Literacy and government communications

Notes and comments from a presentation by Linda Shohet, Director of The Centre for Literacy of Quebec

IALS data show that almost half the Canadian population may have some difficulty with simple written document reading and quantitative calculation. This is obviously not a homogenous group of people. It includes people who are undereducated, speakers of languages other than English or French, and people with various physical and learning disabilities that interfere with communications. Diverse groups are disproportionately represented in these categories, among them aboriginal people, seniors, immigrants, and the poor, to name a few.

The challenge for government today is how to communicate with all its citizens, how to ensure that the chosen means of communication does not further exclude the excluded. A recent study by the Canada Information Office of the information needs of less literate Canadians reveals distrust of the sources and the media used by government communicators [See grid, p. 5]. They read little, watch a lot of television, listen to radio, and do not generally use the internet. The characteristics and perceptions uncovered by the study match many described by Vincent Covello as characteristics that call for "risk communication." [See Risk Communication, p. 6] Covello's seven cardinal rules for risk communication require minimal adaptation to be applied to communication with citizens who have weak literacy skills, keeping in mind that they are not a single audience.

While governments and other agencies move increasingly to web-based communications, in the mistaken assumption that everyone is on-line or soon will be, they have an obligation to adopt a variety of strategies to provide essential information to all citizens. Accommodation is not a charitable gesture. It must be a hallmark of inclusive democracy.

Literacy organizations argue for a sustainable system of adult basic education in every province and territory to make learning available to those who want it. While this is a laudable and necessary goal for a country that claims to be committed to the concept of lifelong learning, it will not answer the immediate, or even all the longer-term, needs around government communication. Even if equitable basic skills provision were available today, it would be years before large numbers could be brought to a level of high school equivalency; and there will always be those who do not choose to, or cannot, learn. Despite the experience of communities like Stonehaven, Ontario, just as there are people at the beginning of the 21st-century with minimal print-literacy in industrialized countries, there will continue to be those who lack both print and electronic literacies. There will be people who choose not to be on-line for the immediate future, and possibly longer. They are still citizens, with rights — often the citizens most in need of information relating to health, security, and resources.

While governments and other agencies move increasingly to web-based communications, in the mistaken assumption that everyone is on-line or soon will be, they have an obligation to adopt a variety of strategies to provide essential information to all citizens. Accommodation is not a charitable gesture. It must be a hallmark of inclusive democracy.

"Education costs money, but then so does ignorance."
– Sir Claus Moser, Warden of Wadham College, Oxford.

Sir Claus Moser,
A credible champion

Champion of a cause: Adult literacy and political commitment

A key factor in moving the UK adult literacy agenda forward was in finding a credible champion who would have the trust of the field as well as the ear of politicians – no easy task. The British government found the ideal person in Sir Claus Moser. A young refugee from the holocaust, Moser eventually became the Chief Statistician of England. So he has credentials as an empiricist, a man who understands numbers, and the way that numbers can influence policy. Moser is also an amateur musician of sufficient talent to have given concerts in The Royal Albert Hall. He is an artist and humanist. And, among his long list of community endeavours, education is a passion. He is Warden of Wadham College, Oxford, but also Chair of the Basic Skill Agency. He knows the education world from its foundations to its apex. An administrator in the basic skills field said, "Sir Claus is the only person I know who can talk to an adult learner, then pick up the phone and call Tony Blair, and be put straight through." Reinforcing the image of a Renaissance Man is his Chairmanship of the British Museum Development Trust which had to fundraise almost £100,000,000 to remodel and design a dome over the Great Court of the museum, unveiled in 2000.

Despite his huge involvement with the museum, Sir Claus agreed to chair the commission that investigated the state of adult basic skills in the UK. The commission's 1999 report, ***A Fresh Start****, drew national attention and support. It contained recommendations [see p.12] that underpin the new UK national strategy unveiled in March 2001. Sir Claus continues to follow every development in the evolution of the strategy.*

An empathetic empiricist, a sensitive statistician

An interview with Sir Claus Moser

(Sir Claus spoke by telephone with Linda Shohet on February 9, 2001, just weeks before the official launch of the strategy.)

Q.: Why did the government create a commission to investigate adult literacy and numeracy?

A: The OECD publication of IALS initially stirred the government. They were dismayed at the poor showing. Then the Labour government in 1997 was giving a high priority to improving literacy and numeracy in the schools. Addressing adult needs was an extension. The decision was taken at a high level. I was invited by the Secretary of State to chair the commission.

Q: Were you invited because of your role as Chairman of the Basic Skills Agency or your stature in the community?

A: I don't think it was because of my role at the BSA. It was important that the chair be independent. I had often spoken in public about literacy and numeracy. The government was serious enough about the perceived problem to want a high level report. They were looking for someone with background in the empirical world. The also wanted an authoritative powerful committee. The choices were made by the Secretary of State.

Q: How was the Report received?

A: It had a powerful impact on public opinion and on the government, largely due to the facts we reported. You know on the day we released the report in March 1999, the Kosovo war broke out, yet we still made the front pages. We had high profile.

Q: What is your reaction to the Strategy that has been developed?

A: We are talking about a draft *[N.B. at the time of the interview, the final strategy had not been released.]* It's still open to some revision. But I am very pleased with the Strategy. It's been addressed by the government in a very clear way. Mr. Blair means business. He's given it a high priority. It's headed for action. The resources are immense. There is no shortage of money.

Q: Do you have any concerns about the way your recommendations have been used?

A: Well, it's taken too long. It's been two years since we made the report. The short-term targets are disappointing, a quarter to half a million now and 750,000 by 2004. Such a major problem among the adult population cannot be tolerated. Our passion to eliminate the problem is missing from the consultation document. The most important single sentence in our Report was that by 2010 the problem should be halved. But there are reasons for the reduction. Targets are difficult to meet. Still, they've caught the essence of the report. It is not the short term, but the long term that matters. Overall, I find the strategy extremely satisfying.

Q: Why did you recommend creating a new national unit to implement the strategy rather than asking the Basic Skills Agency?

A: The Report was independent, created by a committee. We recommended new qualifications, new teaching. We took the view that teaching has to happen everywhere, that we need many partners. And we made suggestions on how to get to the goals. I'm elderly. I'd like to see some progress while I'm alive. The Basic Skills Agency is a small agency. So it was partly out of my impatience and partly out of government commitment that we felt we needed a new agency to bring all the pieces together. But the new Unit will need every bit of help from the BSA that they can get.

THE MOSER GROUP REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Moser Group tabled a series of 21 recommendations touching on national strategy, targets, and campaign; entitlement with specific groups singled out; quality; teacher training; use of new technologies (ICT); core curriculum and qualifications; delivery mechanisms; national coordination; funding; and research and development. The recommendations are grouped and summarized below:

- Create a National Strategy and National Targets for adults and young people until the year 2010.
- Create a continuous high-profile national campaign to increase participation
- Create conditions of entitlement for adults with basic skills below Level 2.* This includes confidential skills assessment on demand, access to high quality information, advice and guidance, and access to a variety of programmes – all free of charge. People who successfully complete basic skills courses should be a priority target for the first million Individual Learning Accounts learners.
- Expand and Improve Opportunities for
  - The Unemployed
  - Workplace Programmes
  - Trade Unions
  - The University for Industry
  - Community Based Programmes
  - Basic Skills Support in Colleges
  - Family-Based Programmes

Improving literacy and numeracy

A fresh start

- Create a national quality framework of standards for basic skills programmes and common inspection standards across agencies.
- Create new qualifications for all teachers of basic skills, develop diploma courses in university education departments and mount in-service courses to familiarize teachers with the new curriculum.
- Support the use of information and communications technology in basic skills programmes.
- Create a new Core Curriculum and Qualifications at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2. Develop new National Literacy and Numeracy Tests. Only programmes using these standards should qualify for funding.
- Implement the strategy through local Lifelong Learning Partnerships, including representatives of those concerned with adult basic skills. Each Partnership should be required to submit an Action Plan for the approval of the Secretary of State.
- Establish a new National Adult Basic Skills Strategy Group, with Ministerial Chairmanship, to oversee the implementation of the National Strategy.
- Revise the role and responsibility of the Basic Skills Agency to advise, promote, coordinate and monitor progress against targets.
- Produce more definitive estimates of all costs, and have all major funding bodies provide incentives for providers to increase the scale of adult basic skills provision. Funds should be made available for outreach and assessment.
- Maintain a research programme to systematically monitor all action plans in collaboration with the Basic Skills Agency.

* Note: Level 2 is not an IALS measurement, but a UK literacy level.

The full report of *A Fresh Start*, can be accessed on the DfEE website at **www.dfee.gov.uk/readwriteplus/links/** Click on **Key documents** icon.

The background and composition of the Moser group can be found at **www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/ mosergroup/index.htm**

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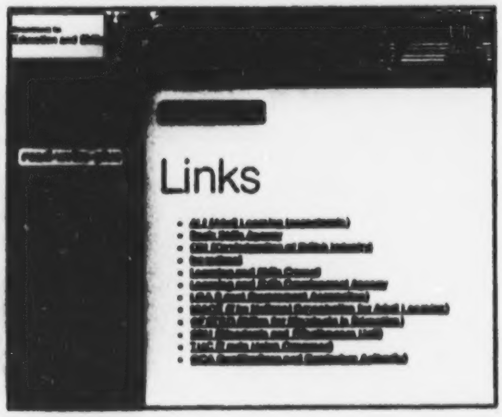
read·write·plus

A coherent national literacy policy: THE BRITISH STRATEGY

The British have taken a positive, aggressive stance in developing their new National Strategy on Adult Literacy and Numeracy. Over the past three years, they have systematically worked toward building consensus in the field and creating a climate of public support for the Strategy unveiled in early spring 2001.

The Labour government soon after winning its first mandate made a strong commitment to improving literacy in the schools. Some of their policies, such as institution of a mandatory daily Literacy Hour in every school, raised the ire of teachers and the suspicion of researchers, but won considerable public support. **Looking at needs in the adult** population seemed a logical next step, particularly since the International Adult Literacy Survey had shown an alarming number of people at Level 1. Key to success in building support was having the Prime Minister affirm his concern and pledge to investigate the extent of need and to act on the findings. He asked the Secretary of State to form a committee. This became The Moser Group, named for Sir Claus Moser, the well-known and highly respected statistician and supporter of the arts and education, who agreed to chair the committee [see Moser interview, p.11].

The recommendations of the Moser Group were coherent and called for investment of human resources and funding over the long term.[See p.12 for summary of Moser recommendations]. The National Strategy, entitled *Skills for Life*, launched in 2001 and funded to more than a £billion sterling over the next seven years, incorporates many of the recommendations.



Strengths of the Skills for Life policy

- It takes the issue beyond reading and writing to include numeracy and ICT
- It embeds basic skills in the larger context of lifelong learning.
- It is far-reaching, linking basic skills to a policy of social inclusion.

read·write·plus

- It builds on the expertise developed over more than three decades of UK adult literacy initiatives.
- It is coherent, connecting all the pieces — provision, partnerships, outreach, awareness, teacher training, curriculum, quality control, qualifications, evaluation and research.
- Specific target populations have been identified.
- "Pathfinder projects" have been designed to monitor and adjust initiatives.
- It attaches dollar values to every initiative.

Challenges for the Skills for Life policy

- Targets are difficult to achieve.
- Many of the achievements of ABE learning are intangible and do not lend themselves to formal testing.
- It is difficult to attract and train large numbers of teachers quickly enough to meet the time lines.
- There is some dissonance between the rhetoric of "skills for life" and the testing and use of a national curriculum. These can leave too little space for a student's personal motivation and goals or a teacher's philosophy, both of which have been shown to be critical in practice.
- There is a tendency to overemphasize the failure of past British initiatives rather than the many models of practice that have inspired practitioners worldwide.
- With the commitment comes a fear among politicians about how quickly and how well targets can be achieved. There are also some who still believe there is an easier answer, a "quick-fix" model somewhere else. There is a danger that some initiatives could be cut short because early results are disappointing.

Overall –Kudos to the British!

The British deserve accolades for creating the most far-reaching coherent adult literacy/basic skills policy ever undertaken. The eyes of the world are watching to see if the human and social need can be addressed within the bounds of political will and ample resources. Despite the concerns, no other world government has come close to creating the vision or the implementation plan of their National Strategy.

Coherent adult learning policy

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) has created an on-line Adult Learners' Gateway to information integrating the literacy/basic skills links into the larger adult and lifelong learning areas. (www.dfee.gov.uk under **adult learning**)

Adult Learners' Gateway

www.dfee.gov.uk

If you require information about any area of Adult Learning, whether you are looking for advice or wish to find out about government policy, the links below should help you find what you need.

Qualifications website
Information for parents, teachers, pupils, lecturers, students, employers and anyone with an interest in qualifications.

learndirect
Learn what you want, where you want, when you want.

Further Education Student Support
Website providing details of sources of financial support for adult students in further education in England.

UK online Learning Centres
A new programme designed to help bridge the gap between those in society who have access to ICT and those who do not.

Second Chances website
A national guide to adult education & training opportunities.

The European Choice
A guide to opportunities for higher education in Europe

The Union Learning Fund (ULF)
Promotes activity by unions in support of the Government's objective of creating a learning

society, by influencing the increase in take up of learning in the workplace and boosting unions' capacity as learning organisations.

National Grid for Learning
A collection of resources brought together by the UK Government to help raise standards in education and to support lifelong learning.

The Basic Skills Agency
Working with organisations to improve basic skills for all.

Adult Learners Week 2001
What would it be like to go back to learning? Adult Learners' Week offers a chance to find out.

read•write•plus
The homepage of the Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit, which leads and co-ordinates all aspects of the national strategy to improve levels of adult literacy and numeracy in England.

DfEE Student Support
This web site is for Students in England and Wales who want to know about available financial help as Higher Education students.

NIACE
The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education is the leading NGO for Adult Learning in England and Wales.

Individual Learning Accounts
To help people overcome one of the most significant barriers to learning - the financial barrier - by making it easier for people to manage, plan and invest in their own learning.

Lifelong Learning website
The leading web site for the encouragement, promotion and development of lifelong learning

International Students website
Guidance for international students wanting to study in the UK.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)
This website is designed to give you a background to NVQs- why they exist and how they can help individuals and key players in the employment, training and qualifications world.

New Deal
New Deal has been created to help unemployed people into work by closing the gap between the skills employers want and the skills people can offer.

University for Industry (UfI)
UfI is a new kind of public-private partnership which will boost the competitiveness of business and the employability of individuals.

Childcare and other Financial Help for HE Students 2001/02
This guide gives detailed information on the Childcare Grant and other financial help available to HE students in 2001/02

Comprehensive database of Canadian literacy research since 1994

The Directory of Canadian Adult Literacy Research in English, compiled under the direction of Dr. Pat Campbell at The Centre for Research on Literacy, University of Alberta, provides quick access to all studies conducted in Canada since 1994. The information has been collected and organized into a searchable database available on NALD. It can be searched under the headings: Author/researcher, title, keyword, location, publication year, subject and context. The first entries included work completed until 1999.

Currently, the directory is being updated. Researchers can submit for inclusion work that meets the following criteria:

1. It is Canadian research from 1994 to the present or research in progress.
2. It must contain these components:

- Statement of problem or purpose
- Background or context
- Method of data collection and analysis
- Discussion of results and implications

The Directory can be accessed at www.nald.ca/crd/start.htm or under the **NALD** front page icon: NALD Access [illegible]

ASSEMBLING THE FRAGMENTS: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON ADULT BASIC SKILLS

Greg Brooks, Kerry Giles,
John Harman, Sally Kendall,
Felicity Rees, Sara Whittaker
National Foundation for Educational Research

ISBN 1 84185 345 3
January 2001

Background

In the autumn of 1999, following the publication of *A Fresh Start: Improving Literacy and Numeracy* (the Moser Report), the Department for Education and Employment commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research to carry out a review of research on adult basic skills.

The review was to cover literacy, numeracy, oracy (speaking and listening skills), English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to teach basic skills to adults. The age range to be covered was from 18 upwards, and it was envisaged that most evidence would come from Britain and then from other parts of the English-speaking world.

There was most information on literacy, then numeracy, ESOL, and ICT, with least on oracy. Oracy skills for monolingual English speakers and numeracy skills for speakers of other languages seem to be almost entirely overlooked.

The history of adult basic education in the UK since the 1970s has been one of swift growth and subtly changing philosophies.

Key Findings

- There is an absence of intervention studies exploring what factors in teaching basic skills cause progress in learning basic skills.
- Very little is known about adults with special educational needs in basic skills provision.
- The major motive for attending basic skills provision is a desire for self-development. Whereas the main reason for parents attending family learning is to help their children.
- Adults involved in family learning have higher attendance, retention and completion rates than adults in general provision and their progression to further study and/or employment is high.
- Little is known about what basic skills teaching is like on the ground.

Copies of the full report (RR220) are available from DfEE Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ. Check for prices. Copies of the Research Brief (RB220) are available free of charge from the above address. Research Briefs and Research Reports can also be accessed at http://www.dfee.gov.uk/research/

Further information about this research: Steve Leman, Room N607, DfEE, Moorfoot Sheffield S1 4PQ; Email: steve.leman @dfee.gov.uk.

learndirect

The University for Industry (UfI) was created in response to the vision in the government's Green Paper, 'The Learning Age.' It proposed "a learning society in which everyone, from whatever background, routinely expects to learn and upgrade their skills throughout life."

To bring learning and skills into people's lives, UfI developed the **learndirect** service which "allows users to choose what to learn, when to learn and at what pace." The reasons for individual learning include for fun or work; to gain knowledge and skills to enhance employability; or, to take control of their future; for businesses, it should help to improve their competitiveness.

learndirect courses are computer-based. To support learners who are not comfortable with this new way of learning, 800 staffed **learndirect centres** have been set up around the country. **www.learndirect.co.uk**

pathfinder projects

Ten pathfinder projects have been designed to test and evaluate the changes to the learning infrastructure (primarily screening tools, the new standards, core curriculum and National Tests) that are being introduced. They will implement the new strategy for improving literacy and numeracy skills in a variety of contexts including in the community and voluntary sector, adult institutions, further education colleges, family literacy and numeracy projects, work-based learning and learndirect centres. In one area they will focus on developing and implementing innovative technology, and in another on self-study packages. In others, they will be looking at ways of motivating jobseekers. There is one pathfinder project in each region and another project based in prisons. **www.dfee.gov.uk/readwriteplus/pathfinderprojects**

GRASSROOTS:

COMMUNITY WRITING 2001

LITERACY AND THE HOMELESS

Thomas Wolfe said figuratively, *"You can't go home again." If you literally have no home, you certainly cannot.*

Since the 1960s, the thin line between financial security and insolvency has been crossed by many Canadians who find themselves living precarious lives without permanent shelter. They may be drug addicts, alcoholics, gamblers, or mental patients pushed out of dwindling numbers of institutions; they may be victims of family abuse or family disintegration; or they may be sensitive people who have lost their way in a culture too fast to take notice. Homelessness has become so familiar that many of us no longer notice or we avert our eyes.

Many of the homeless have not had access to school, and lack basic literacy skills; others are accomplished writers who can give voice and shape to the communities that flourish on the street -the nurturing and the predatory. Worldwide today, there are newspapers and poetry anthologies written and sold by the homeless and former homeless to generate income. The writers reveal themselves and question the social conditions that produce their lives. Who writes on the street? What do they write about? Who trains new writers? Who publishes them? Who benefits from their work? Does the writing change their collective reality? Does it change individual lives?

These were some of the questions that we posed at this year's Grassroots: Community Writing Workshop organized on April 12 by The Centre for Literacy in collaboration with the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival. Writers from communities across Canada also gave a session at Blue Metropolis where they challenged stereotypes and defied the nameless labeling of "the homeless." We heard about street people who could not read or write well, but we also heard about talented writers and artists who find themselves on the street at some point in their lives.

Several times during the Community Writing session, someone commented on the John Stackhouses of the media world. No need, they suggested, to send in undercover reporters to reveal the truth about homelessness. There is plenty of talent on the street ready to tell it the way it is. There is no single model of a street paper, however. Despite the principles and goals of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA, See p. 19), there are differences in means of production, in marketing, in distribution. Some papers are not even members of the five-year-old organization.

As for literacy, the connection is not simple. The stresses and immediate needs of food, shelter, and safety put literacy training far down the list of priorities for the homeless. It seems most possible to reach people at the meeting places and drop-in centres where a sense of community has been established. Yet only a few weeks after the Montreal festival when I visited the Meeting Place in Toronto, Pedro Cabezas, one of the coordinators, explained why, despite the computer room, the darkroom, and a history of literacy and homelessness work at the centre, they no longer have a formal connection with local literacy providers. Pedro finds that literacy workers tend to have a limited understanding of homelessness and an exaggerated sense of what formal literacy training can do for people on the street. Nevertheless, without naming it, they are doing what some have called "transformative" literacy.

Before I left, Pedro showed me their storage room. In a space no larger than a small bedroom, on wooden shelves neatly stacked from floor to ceiling were rows of plastic bins (of Zeller's or Canadian Tire variety), each with a name taped on the outside. Each held the entire belongings of a regular at the Meeting Place. It spares the owner the indignity of carrying tattered bags or pushing battered food wagons. Pedro's photo of the storage room recurs through the next 16 pages.

In these pages, we introduce the participants at the Blue Metropolis Festival and Community Writing Workshop by name, give them faces, and reprint selections from the writings that they read or shared at the Festival. One participant, Michael Paul-Martin, from The Meeting Place, offers his impressions of what he heard that day; Michael's comments are in boxes as "Michael says." (LS)

Michael says:
We went in cold. The presenters were introduced to each other at the event "panel" in front of the audience on April 12, so to speak; there was really no prior opportunity for them to get to know one another. The only thing we had were the bios contained in the hand-out telling us briefly about each delegate and the work we each did. In that light the presentations were informative; they provided a clearer idea and understanding about where each person or group was in terms of approach, progress and priorities.

Gimme Shelter

A Resource for Literacy and Homelessness Work
by Betsy Trumpener for The Literacy and Homelessness Project St. Christopher House Adult Literacy Program: Toronto 1997.
114pp.
All excerpts reprinted with permission.

Gimme Shelter!

Renaming Literacy

In Canada, adults who admit that they have literacy problems still risk being labelled "slow" or "stupid." This may be especially true on the street. Staff at many Toronto emergency shelters and rooming houses agreed that even hearing the word "literacy" can turn away potential learners. A worker at Seaton House, Metro Toronto's largest men's hostel, explained that "for men who have a long history of institutionalization or incarceration, image is extremely important, and illiteracy is still highly stigmatized." Research on literacy and homelessness in the United States confirms this, noting that potential learners feared ridicule and embarrassment, and stressed the need for privacy, especially in residential institutions, like hostels. Indeed, many drop-ins and shelters have abandoned the literacy label and renamed learning opportunities as adult education courses, computer classes, writing groups, and learning circles. There are, however, examples of successful groups in drop-ins that bluntly state their literacy orientation.

The realities of life on the street and the challenge of working on a stigmatized issue can encourage us to think about learning and literacy work in new ways. In challenging more traditional ways of teaching literacy, our work can become an "incubator for fresh ideas about literacy education." One "fresh idea" is to integrate reading and writing into activities, programs and projects that are already established in a drop-in or shelter.

Literacy and Homelessness: What's the connection?

What does it mean to do literacy work with homeless adults? What does it say about the nature and causes of homelessness? Does our work imply that literacy will empower the people to transcend homelessness? "Two critical assumptions (of this work) were that homeless adults needed such training and that adult educators would know how to provide it..." An American Government report about Adult Education for the Homeless programs was entitled "Learning to Hope." Are literacy facilitators in drop-ins and shelters expected to be magicians of hope? (p.8)

Illiteracy and Poverty

There are documented links between poverty and illiteracy, with research indicating both that "circumstances that created people's poverty were much the same as those preventing them from acquiring an education" and that "enrolling in literacy programs did not mean an end to poverty." While acknowledging that literacy cannot create jobs, research has shown that "literacy is a cause and consequence of employment success, and can make an individual more employable when there are jobs." (p.9)

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUMEDIA FOCUS

LACMF SPECIAL INSERT - VOLUME 15 • NUMBER 2

The Centre for Literacy, 3040 Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1A4
Editor: Linda Shohet • **Layout & design:** Ponctuation Grafix
• Depot legal – 1991 • ISSN 1192-3288 • Bibliotheque Nationale du Quebec

The Centre for Literacy is committed to supporting and improving literacy practices in schools, community and workplace. It is dedicated to increasing public understanding of the changing definition of literacy in a complex society.

The Centre for Literacy acknowledges the National Literacy Secretariat, Dawson College and Human Resources Development Canada, for their support.

Homelessness and Poverty

Understanding the primacy of poverty in the lives of the people who are homeless is key to offering literacy opportunities that are relevant. One American study indicated that "when given a chance to describe their own needs, people are more likely to stress first their economic problems" rather than education. A needs assessment of one group of homeless women indicated that finding a home was their first priority, and that gaining literacy skills was not even mentioned.

Our own experience also suggests the inadequacy of an approach that focuses on education as the single solution to economic problems. Most literacy programs are well aware of their learners' struggles to find and keep housing and jobs. Many learners are hungry when they come to literacy programs, affecting their ability to learn. Still, as literacy programs struggle to survive in an atmosphere of cutbacks, they often have to justify their existence by stressing outcomes and speaking in the language of the marketplace. One of the few analytical Canadian articles about literacy and homelessness notes the irony of the coexistence of literacy for empowerment and literacy for global competitiveness within the same literacy program. The article lauds Frontier College, which works to provide accessible learning opportunities "whenever and wherever people congregate." Yet it points out that Beat the Street, - a pioneering literacy program for marginalized street youth- and The Workplace Literacy program, which promotes itself on the grounds of maintaining economic competitiveness, coexist with Frontier College. The article identifies this dichotomy as a "clear pointer to current trends in literacy work in industrialized countries."[1]

Some theorists go so far as to argue that "rather than enfranchising people...(literacy) is ulterior and uniquely devoted to Western economic ends...(it) uses literacy and literacy standards to maintain privilege and parcel disadvantage."

Whether we believe these findings or take them with a grain of salt, they do challenge us to consider why and how we want to do literacy work with people who are homeless. What are their needs and desires? How does improving their literacy skills relate to their needs and desires?

Literacy skills in themselves will not necessarily end poverty or ensure that people are housed. Literacy is, however, a tool that people can choose to use for personal and social empowerment. (p.10)

Betsy Trumpener, Prince George, BC, is a journalist and fiction writer who worked for more than a decade in Toronto's adult literacy movement. From 1995 to 1997, Betsy lead the Literacy and Homelessness Project at St. Christopher House, where she facilitated a writing group and production of a participatory newsletter with members of a homeless drop-in program. She also did research and training and helped develop a network of Toronto street educators. Betsy is the author of "Gimme Shelter!" The report offered models for creating meaningful learning opportunities in hostels and drop-ins. Her fiction and non-fiction publication credits include The Globe and Mail, Canadian Press, THIS Magazine, NOW Magazine, and the Journal of Addiction and Mental Health. Betsy currently works for CBC Radio in northern BC.

Betsy Trumpener

The North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA)

The North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA) was formed in 1996 to link street newspapers in North America, to support each other, to improve the quality of the papers and to increase the voice of impoverished and marginalized people for social justice.

NASNA defines a street paper as a publication that informs the public regarding poverty issues and/or creates employment for low-income and homeless people through the sales.

NASNA's Mission is to support a street newspaper movement that creates and upholds journalistic and ethical standards while promoting self-help and empowerment among people living in poverty.

Source: www.speakeasy.org/nasna/

A directory with links to NASNA members can be found at http://nch.ari.net/streetnews/

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[1] "From the Campsite to the Street" by Jean-Pierre Velis in *Alpha 90. Current Research in Literacy*. Jean-Paul Hautecoeur, ed. Quebec: Ministère de l'éducation du Québec, and UNESCO Institute for Education, 1990. pp. 15 – 29.

The Street Post, Toronto

***The Street Post*, The Meeting Place Drop-In Center, St. Christopher House, Toronto**
The Meeting Place Adult Drop-In program was established by St. Christopher House in 1987 to respond to the growing number of homeless and socially isolated individuals in downtown Toronto. Since then, the Meeting Place has become a landmark centre in Toronto for services for the homeless. *The Street Post* newsletter has been a project of the Meeting Place since 1997. Its purpose is to provide a vehicle of expression for those who would otherwise remain silent.

Michael Paul-Martin

Michael Paul-Martin is a Cree poet originally from James Bay in North Ontario. He speaks Cree; he reads/writes Cree syllabics. His first collection of poetry, *She Said Sometimes I Hear Things*, came out in 1996. For four years, Michael has been one of the writers/editors of *The Street Post* newsletter of Toronto West. He has also worked on scripts for theatre of the oppressed and for a movie. Since February 2000, Michael has been taking leadership training at St. Christopher House; he graduates in June 2001.

She Said
Sometimes
I Hear Things
Michael J. Paul Martin

She Said Sometimes I Hear Things

by Michael Paul-Martin

Her upbeat walk-in,
seventy years frailty small
without Vancouver vanity,
sat modest at Kettle Drop-in.
Almost cheery to a nobody
listener in particular she told
how the murder of her man months ago
still stabbed her heartless.

She said I don't have my man, only this
bad heart. I did have a way to die once,
but I just had open heart surgery.

Beside her a wall masking
tape held the long wail of Killer Whale
loud on red, its massive green & black
drew back Bald Eagle as an open-beak
fin tail, headed yellow-white.

She said sometimes I hear things.

Flying whale on high absent blue sea,
signed Jimmy Hackel '91, wore piercing
happy harpoon. A most pointed laugh-in
entered downbeat heads-up and came out
below bared teeth, big on face-lift.

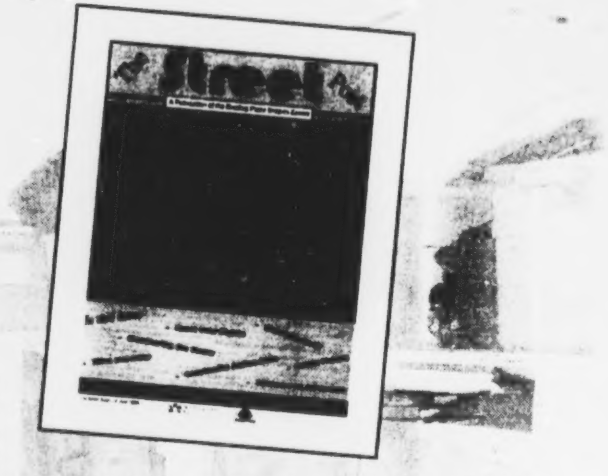
She said somebody dies a natural death
is different, but a murder...

She Said Sometimes I Hear Things. (1996). Toronto: 7th Generation Books, p. 11.

Michael says:
I read the title poem from my book, ***She Said Sometimes I Hear Things****. It shows, partially, a sample of street life in Vancouver BC, as lived by an elderly woman. I also presented "Sweet Melt," a kids' poem which won honourable mention at the recent street art awards ceremony in St Lawrence Market, Toronto. This one shows other possibilities and variations from the typical topics covered in street papers i.e. issue-oriented, controversial and political. I believe that sometimes it's better to express issues, personal or otherwise, through art. Art leads one to safely explore profound ideas and feelings at a subconscious level. It's safe because it generally doesn't arouse feelings like anger and rage, to the point of hurting the artist or his/her audience and readership.*

Michael writes social and political commentary focusing on Native realities, systemic oppression, and social hypocrisy; but he also turns an ironic eye on the lives of the homeless themselves.

His recent Restaurant Reviews of Soup Kitchens caught mainstream media attention in Toronto; a large daily later sent a food critic "undercover" to write soup kitchen reviews, without acknowledgment to Michael.



The Soup Kitchen Report

...These reviews are fun, and light-hearted in the main. Marginal life is serious enough as it is. The articles are informative and practical. They are also part satire, perhaps to remind us of the ridiculousness, the absurdity of the new "millennium" times...

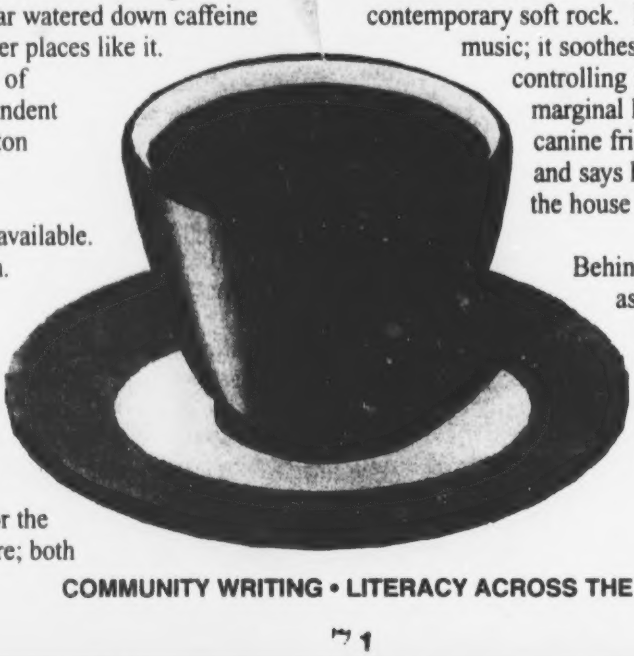
... Our original intention was to review all the poor peoples' eating establishments located in West Toronto first, with Yonge Street as the dividing line, then eventually move to Toronto East. For this issue... we decided to do Good Shepherd of the east side, knowing that we're not done grazing and scavenging in the wild west just yet.

Excerpt from " The Soup Kitchen Report,"
The Street Post, Spring 2001, 18-19.
by Michael Paul-Martin

St. Felix Centre
(The Order of Felician Sisters)

St. Felix coffee is the best; it has super strength, amazing flavour, and fantastic aroma. It's a godsend when compared to the regular watered down caffeine versions you get at most other places like it. St. Felix coffee reminds one of Moonbeam Café, the independent coffee shop over at Kensington Market.

But today there is no coffee available. It's a rarity; no coffee I mean. Nicole, the good-natured Volunteer Co-ordinator, says to a patron upon the latter's inquiry, "We ran out of (coffee) donations." It's a good thing you can always run as an emergency over to either Evangel Hall or the Meeting Place Drop-in Centre; both have "regular" coffee, and they're only a short walking distance away.



St. Felix is fairly new, a max forty-seater cafeteria place, situated in a basement; but it's not dark and gloomy, there's plenty of light coming from spacious windows along the west wall. Also, various decorative plants sit on the window sills.

It's mainly a homemade soup and sandwich place, a convenience for those who prefer a light meal at that time of day. Both St. Stephen's and Scott Mission serve regular substantive meals at late morning (these places were reviewed last time). Dessert is usually pastry, muffins, or canned mix fruit.

To lend to an atmosphere of ease one can always find Brother John sitting at a table conversing with patrons. These are mainly one on one, and I suppose it's a comfort to those who might need additional privacy for their more personal concerns. There is also from a corner of the "cafeteria" a stereo. Sometimes it plays KISS FM's contemporary soft rock. But most often it sticks to classic music; it soothes stressed nerves, one of the main controlling factors affecting street and marginal life. Finally, Coors, Nicole's canine friend, comes in from time to time and says hi! to everyone. He's sort of like the house dog.

Behind me, towards closing time, a man asks Nicole about where and how to get a few clothing items. It is Friday. She says," Come back on Monday, we should have some clothes... are you coming on Monday?"

Robert Thomas Payne

Robert Thomas Payne was a sailor in the Canadian Merchant Marine for 10 years. Then he was an actor. At one point he found himself homeless and in need. He says that what he saw and heard in the drop-ins and soup kitchens of Toronto confirmed his belief that all human beings are subject to the same frailties, aspirations and realities, though not the same opportunities. Since 1997, he has been volunteering with St. Christopher House/The Meeting Place Drop-In as editor and one of the writers of *The Street Post*. He offers words of encouragement to people he's befriended on the street. He thinks a solution to homelessness is opening the lines of communication. He can be found wandering the streets of Toronto, or sitting here and there, listening more than talking. "This brings me the gift of many interesting moments. Like this one in Montreal."

Weathering Winter and Such

Editorial Note, *The Street Post*, Winter 2000
by Robert Payne

"Your slightest look easily will unclose me though
I have closed myself as fingers."
e.e. cummings

Winter has come and gone once again. Along with the bitter cold quickening people's step there were times when some paused to consider other peoples' lives. Especially at celebration of thanksgiving and for the birth of Christianity some paused at dinner to wonder what others were eating...some even wondered about those with no food. In the warmth of some beds some people wondered about people they once knew and where they might be. The media, ever in touch with public tastes, were everywhere searching for a story to tell the cozy ones at home.

The
treet
Post
In this issue :

The "holidays" were also the days of cameras. A person could not attend a drop-in or soup kitchen without having to wade through reporters and more volunteers than usual all smiling all willing to talk. Between the "How are you"s and the "What's it like"s, it became difficult for some to speak to friends in peace. People sitting at the same table who've seen each other around for a while don't have to ask each other what it's like. They already know. The people who are and were asking those questions, act friendly, then leave. Later, they may pause to consider what they've seen, what they've heard, but with so much else in their lives to consider, where will that consideration lead? Meanwhile, after they leave, people still sitting at those tables or gathering where they gather discuss things among themselves. Most people don't like strangers asking them questions. Most people are wary of smiling unfamiliar faces. As for the cameras, I've heard that instead of getting turkey, having to duck sucks. If you're a stranger to life on the streets, you should be aware that privacy is at a minimum. You are always surrounded by people. To get even five minutes alone is difficult. There is enough stress for everyone already; no more is needed. No more stupid questions are needed. Real human contact, that is what is needed most of all! If you have the space, invite a face!

There is an attitude quite often that a story is a story. "The Problem" is more important than the individual. Yet it should be remembered that these individuals are scrambling for the tools they need to just survive. Those lucky enough to get into the one or two Out of the Cold churches that are open on a given day start their day at 6 a.m. and after a quick bite are tossed onto the streets for the day to go from place to place each of which is open for only a couple of hours. (And between May – Oct, even this is much less of an option.) Sleep-deprivation, killer winter cold, unsmiling faces from the majority of Toronto and the million little degradations meant to inform a person that they are not welcome, coupled with the memories and feelings of loss from all the shit that happened in their past to bring them to this point is part of the daily regimen. Sure, lack of funding is a big issue and is perhaps the crucible upon which your intentions are being tested. When can you say that you've done enough? If people sleep and die on the front steps of missions or behind churches or are being force-fed some fundamentalist views just to get a bite to eat, are Christians being listened to? If for the majority of the year most executive staff members of most places are never around to share a cup of coffee with the people they purport to be speaking for, should they be posing with them?

Who are the homeless you ask? The short answer is that the homeless are human beings, often suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome, dealing with the law of the jungle inherent in most of the "places of peace and respect and tolerance" because a whole lot of the staff are too busy doing nothing for their 15 dollars plus an hour...while client/volunteers are too busy. Anything that is a barrier to helping people re-gain their self-esteem has no place in the drop-in universe. Every day these people (alias "clients") are faced with indignities to the spirit, and are aware of the hypocrisy in many of the "helpful" places. These are human beings who don't want to be featured on T.V. for being poor. Privacy is important. There are many people out and about who don't want the folks at home to see how they are doing. However, instead of being seen as individuals, they are treated as stories or sound-bytes.

These are human beings who don't want to be featured on T.V. for being poor. Privacy is important. There are many people out and about who don't want the folks at home to see how they are doing. However, instead of being seen as individuals, they are treated as stories or sound-bytes.

Of course we must constantly repeat the news that not everyone is doing well, and we need as many volunteers as possible, and to acknowledge the good ones. These are noble quests. ... Remember though, that people on the street have already met a lot of insincere people; therefore it is better to quest with more sincerity. Saying you care is not the same as showing you care. Yes, there are people who have such a commitment to getting to know and help the disadvantaged that they are always getting home way too late and getting up way too early and doing a million things all day every day. They are so few and so necessary and they could really use a helping hand.

My bit is being places, talking to people. Sometimes it's late at night on a rainy street corner, or early in the morning in a park or a drop-in etc, when suddenly a scrap of paper is produced and the person asks if I can do something with it. People want to relate their stories in their own way, themselves. That's the reason *The Street Post* exists. The person you ignore as you walk down the street could be the person whose work you are about to look at. To reach that art that is within everyone isn't always easy. Nor is it easy to build the trust. These things take time. The mainstream media, other people, life, have turned some people almost into mutes. It is becoming known on the streets though that *The Street Post* is here for those voices often ignored. Whenever a new issue of the "zine" comes out and I am able to put a copy into the hands of each contributor and see that look in their eyes as they realize that others will see their work, it feels good, and that's good enough for me. *The Street Post* is not about any one individual but rather about a whole lot of individuals who are willing to share with each other and others. To continue this journey we must continue to share with each other. Look around you; there are stories everywhere. Believe in yourself, don't let the bastards grind you down! For those of you asking questions: the best way to get the gift of an answer is to bring to the table the gift of time to spend with others. Every day should be one of Thanksgiving. As for me, I heard that for the millennium, I should consider the lilies of the field. I will, but I want to consider them one lily at a time.

Michael says:

Robert Payne read his "Weathering Winter and Such" which consists of his thoughts, opinions, and feelings about life on the street, homelessness, dealing with the media, volunteering, and the reason for The Street Post's existence, etc. In "A Session With Zig-Zag," his interview with a squeegee, we come face to face with what it's like to live out on the street as a young male in Toronto, with his experiences with the cops at the park, and with making a living out of squeegeeing. Perhaps more than any other presentation that day, Robert's two articles enabled us to actually hear street people and the near homeless talking to us.

Street Feat, Halifax

Street Feat is Atlantic Canada's only street newspaper, and covers diverse issues relating to poverty. *Street Feat*, in its fourth year of operation, also calls itself the voice of the poor. It has gradually increased its readership to more than 5000 per issue. Apart from annual subscriptions, street vendors sell the papers at various locations in downtown Halifax where there is a high concentration of passers-by. Revenues come from a combination of advertising and subscription sales and street vending as well as from donations.

Street Fea
n And Poverty

Mansoor Wani

Mansoor Wani is an MBA in International Business and Information Systems and an independent business consultant. He volunteers his time for office management at *Street Feat* including subscription renewals and communication design. He is also involved with other non-profit organizations in Halifax.

Excerpts from

On a side note. Perspectives change

by Mansoor Wani

Street Feat, Vol. 4 Issue 2, March-April 2001

Only a few months ago, I would not stop to look at anyone doing anything "funny" on Spring Garden.

I was a business student busy completing my masters and even though I cared for people, I did not think much of the people selling anything on Spring Garden. But anyway....

Then things changed after Graduation. For a complexity of reasons that space will not permit me to elaborate on, I was not able to work for some time. So I was homeless and nearly penniless. A not-so-rich family took me in, free stay and free food till things got better. I started working eventually. But that is not what I wanted to talk about...

I started to volunteer with *Street Feat* last summer, initially for 2 days a week. My goodness, it is a different world out there. I thought I knew how the world works, but that was only a thought. I remember back at school it took us a good six weeks to collect about $650 for United Way. Many of us would drop a few coins as we passed by the collection can and then proceed downtown to eat a meal for $20-30, not to mention the money my friends spent to get a bit light as it got dark. But anyway...

I met people, who, despite their shortcomings, were struggling to make a respectable living. And many of them were stuck in a system that almost sucks one in. No money, no phone, no job, no money... and many things in-between. But anyway that is not what I wanted to talk about....

Just across the hall from Street Feat, the Mental Health association has a club. Many of the people working with us are members of that club. And believe it or not, they are human too, and the strange thing is they have emotions. One of the funny things I learnt, there are poor people in this part of the world also.

.....

What are we seeking in life that makes us forget the basic principles of life? Or have the authors of "How to achieve happiness" books become too commercialized? Have you not tried any of their suggestions? Well, if you are sad, go and shop, you might not feel better, but hey, someone made money, so what the heck. But anyway....

I was mentioning women and poverty, how single mothers survive. Yeah...I don't know much about the topic. Read the other articles in this issue. I am sure you will learn something. And... what do you know, maybe in one of the bookstores, in the self-help section, you might find a book on surviving as a single mother. But that is not what I wanted to talk about anyway....

My goodness, I just wanted to say a few words before I actually said the words I meant to say, so here they are.

All in good time

The sad stories will rhyme,
Give it some time
The pain will go, after a while
And if, when you look back, and you smile
It was probably worthwhile.

All in good time, just don't give up hope
You are not burdened,
With more than with what you can cope.

All in good time, just don't say never.
All things go, poverty cannot last forever
But that is not what I wanted to say anyway....
But you get the message.

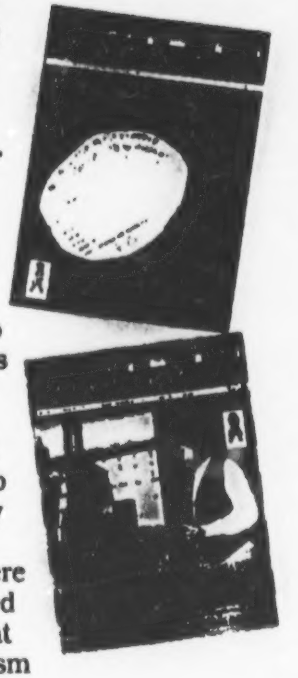
Michael says:
Mansoor Wani's presentation explained the history of Street Feat, how it got started four years ago, what it has done since, and that the "tiger hasn't learned to write yet." We learned from the poem, "My House Calls," not only about the experiences of a marginalized person from the Halifax area, but also how that person saw those experiences as part of her overall artistic vision. Every region in the country has its own flavour, its own style, when it comes to coping with the stressful realities of street life and homelessness.

Erin Wilson

Erin Wilson is a young single parent with a BA in English and Philosophy and a diploma in PR. She has been writing with *Street Feat* for over two years. She sees herself as "dedicated to social issues of poverty, homelessness and civil rights and has struggled with many of these herself."

How far have we really come? An excerpt

by Erin Wilson
Street Feat, Vol. 3 Issue 1, Feb. 2000



When I found out I was going to have the opportunity to write something with regards to Black History Month I was excited about the chance to address an issue that I believe a lot can be said about. When I sat down to begin, there were so many facts in my head that I became overwhelmed. There is so much to say. I started off with a basic notion that the parallels between racism and poverty are boundless.

From there I determined that the most important place that these parallels manifest themselves is in our school system. I made this determination because systemic racism begins here. I think I got stuck at this point because I became fearful that I was going to say something unpopular that people would not pay attention to. It doesn't bother me that my opinion may be unpopular. On the contrary, I believe that what I have to say, though not original, must be said in such a way that it is clear that it is true. I will feel that I have not done my duty as a writer unless the facts are vivid and undeniable. The thought of somebody bypassing this article with the belief that it doesn't affect them worries me. If anyone disagrees with the truth of these words then they are the ones that most need to hear them. In fact it is the very ignorance that so many of us possess that causes me to write with such trepidation.

This past Saturday night I attended the Juba' Lee celebration at the Metro Center, a musical concert honouring Martin Luther King Day and Black History Month. I had been mulling over this story for days and had to dig in my pocket in the dark for a pen and paper when one of the presenters brought up a point that is central to my argument. He was speaking about Samuel de Champlain and how he was the first explorer to map most of Nova Scotia in 1603. Unknown to many is that Matthew DeCosta, a black man, made this possible by translating the Mic Mac language for Champlain. I will echo his words when I say, bet you didn't read about that in the history books.

......

All people plagued by poverty face a number of social injustices that are tenfold if systemic racism is present. It is too late for those of us that are finished school but it's not too late to strive for a better education for all children. Sure, a lot has been accomplished in battling poverty and racism over the years, but how far have we really come if we can't even keep racism out of the classroom?

Michael says:
In her first year of university sociology class, where the "murder" of Natives were referred to within the general history of Aboriginals, some students said the whites "didn't do it on purpose," a view which Erin says is of the "don't-blame-me complex." Her focus, and indirectly Street Feat's focus, is the racist attitudes towards Black people and Aboriginals in and around Halifax. I assume then that both cultural groups have substantial segments of their populations at the poverty or near-poverty levels. I sensed, too, that Erin has done considerable thinking in her attempt to understand the extent and nature of racial discrimination, and how it has contributed to her approach and commitment as a conscientious worker for Street Feat.

"On the contrary,

I believe that what I have to say,

though not original, must be said

in such a way that it is clear

that it is true."

L'Itinéraire, Montréal

Institutions
L'Itinéraire

Le Groupe Communautaire L'Itinéraire is a community group made up of people who have experienced homelessness or substance abuse. They created a street newspaper which is produced and sold on the streets of Montreal by people who have known homelessness. The group has also set up a restaurant and an Internet/Computer Center to help the homeless and unemployed gain the income, skills and confidence they need to reintegrate themselves into society. Income from the restaurant helps fund the paper. The editors train their writers through three stages: writing personal accounts, naming of social and political issues embedded in the personal accounts, and finally critical analysis of these issues as they shape our daily lives. L'Itinéraire is considered one of the best street papers in the world.

My House Calls: A warrior's work as a nurse

by Dominique Rousseau

Street Feat, Vol. 3 No. 5 June-July 2000

I have no place at my table to invite you in.
A man made disaster - took my home, blew it away, with my kin.
I have no first-aid kit left - I emptied mine, so long ago. I'm all that's left.
I have no place to rock a child, In pain, or was left alone, scared or tired.
I no longer have strong hands to hold a grieving parent's hands,
Nor a war vet hands, who did good deeds,
For all the ones he helped and freed
As the hands he had were blown away.
When he went to a battlefield one day.
I have no nurse's cap, or gown, or cape to wear, on a cold winter day.
As man made disasters blew them away.
I have no cup to fill to, give a sip of water, when you are ill.
I'm too weak today - to do C.P.R. along the way when your heart has stopped,
All I can do for us, is to Stop and Pray each day.
That a man made disaster will not take your life away.
I have no supply of bears to give, to hug and hold,
So you may live.
A man made disaster took them away - FROM ME EACH DAY
I have no rocking chair with me, to hold upon my broken knee,
To sing a lullabye to you
when you feel so sad, and so blue.
A man made disaster took that away too.
I have no lamp, to light when it turns dark - for you
or candle to hold, to search for you.
As you lay wounded, sick, alone in the darkness too.
A man made disaster took these from me too.
I have NOT A THING to help your pain - I AM ILL, ALSO LAME
Or a bed, or home to share
In the rain , or any thing to ease your pain.
a man made disaster took this too.
ALL I AM, I offer you
I have no food, or money left
My pockets EMPTY, just like you.
A MAN MADE DISASTER, TOOK THIS AWAY TOO. From me, as it did to you.
...
I HAVE NO FRESH FLOWERS FOR YOUR HAIR
NOR A GARLAND YOU may wear - ONCE -
THE FLOWERS that sway, and smell so sweet,
The wild ones that grow beneath my feet-
ARE GONE FOR NOW
THEY ARE NOT MINE to keep.
I must leave them where they grow,
To GIVE their love, to someone else, who passes by AND FEELS LOST-ALONE
The WILD FLOWERS, WILL take THEM home, SO they need never again need to roam.
AS I STOP BY EMERGENCY ROADS TO SEEK YOU OUT -
ALONG MY WAY-
OF ALL THE HOUSE CALLS I CAN MAKE EACH DAY -
I KNOW THIS FACT - FOR SURE.
NO MAN MADE DISASTER -
WILL EVER STOP LOVE'S CURE,
THE LOVE I HAVE DEEP IN MY HEART.
THAT I TRY AS BEST AS I CAN - TO GIVE YOUR HEART A NEW START; ~7
TO BE THE NURSE, I WAS BEFORE -
WHO MADE A PLEDGE, TO HEAL, AND GIVE AND BRING A SMILE, AND EASE SOME PAIN GIVE HOPE TO ALL MAIMED. I FIND THE ONLY CARE FOR ALL MANKIND I KNOW THAT WORKS.
THE LOVE THAT BINDS US ALL - HUMAN KIND
THAT IS THE MIRACLE OF LIFE.
THE HEALER - ABOVE US ALL SENT BELOW THE CARE OF BROKEN HEARTS, & SOUL OF BROKEN BODIES.
WHEN MAN MADE DISASTERS US BEFALL -
I DO TRY HARD TO TRY EACH DAY -
TO TAKE MY PAIN & YOURS AWAY -
AND TO STOP AND PRAY-

Dominique Rousseau was a street person, originally from Montreal. Everyone in Halifax knew her. She passed away in July 1999 and this article was published on her first anniversary. Her life and death changed many people for the better.

Songs of the Street

***Our Voice Magazine*, Edmonton**

Michael Walters

Michael Walters describes himself as "a writer who unintentionally gave up writing to facilitate the writing of others." He is the co-founder of Songs of the Street, a project for street poets. He is also past-editor of *Our Voice Magazine* and the Chairperson of the 48-member North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA). Michael calls *Our Voice Magazine* "a social justice and social action publication produced and sold in part by the homeless, the formerly homeless, and people living in poverty. *Our Voice* is a form of independent media that puts the voice of the poor first, always." The magazine has been sold on the streets of Edmonton since April of 1994.

Michael has also been chairperson of Songs of the Street Art Foundation started in 1995. The foundation hosts annual Street Poetry festivals. To date, it has published 4 volumes of street poetry each of which sold 1500 copies. More than 200 street poets have participated in Songs of the Street. Michael describes them as "people who continue to find elegance in their misfortunes and peace in a difficult world." [See BOX 1]

SONGS OF THE STREET
VOLUME IV
SONGS OF THE STREET

Michael says:

It is mainly through Michael Walters's presentation (and probably through Betsy Trumpener's and L'Itineraire's) that Robert and I realized the difference between The Street Post and the majority of the other street papers, especially in matters of distribution and marketing. The Street Post's priority is still the need to have other volunteers involved in the Meeting Place newsletter, as writers, editors, canvassers, promoters, sketching/drawing artists, photographers, interviewers, researchers, computer graphic artists, and ad procurers by phone and in person. Michael Walters has done a tremendous job in terms of making it possible for street people and the marginalized to be heard through Our Voice Magazine and Songs of the Street.

BOX 1

The Songs of the Street Arts Foundation, Edmonton

In Edmonton's inner city, where many of these voiceless people live, there was a need to create room for people to express themselves. Songs of the Street started out as a poetry idea. Something simple that allowed people who lived in poverty to read the words they use to describe their conditions and their understandings... Over the years it has become a community...A community of poets, no longer only from the inner city, but city wide, has formed, and together they find their darkness and together they tear it down. As we look to the future, we look to develop what has become the Songs of the Street Arts Foundation, a project now looking for ways to give people voice beyond the swing of the written word... [W]e opened ... up to submissions of art — paintings, sculptures. We opened up the event to fall harvest and the wonderful community gardens throughout the city.

....

The Foundation is open to those people interested in a truly artistic and healthy form of community development.

Michael Walters, "Preface." *Songs of the Street*, Volume IV, 2000.

Michael read poems from several volumes.

Solitaire

by Heather Slade

This lonely game of hearts
and minds

soulless bodies lying one on top of another
not knowing me
never loving

but you give and I take
and next time
I'll be taken

in a different suit
by a different suitor

black on white
good and evil
or is it just darkening shades of Grey
that I am too blind to see

callous too many one night stands
and this house of cards
never stands
up
to the rigor or my life
or maybe

even yours
we never go to find out
it's only a game
"don't be serious"

No strings
FUN isn't it
I'm sick of solitaire and
lay them quick without a thought

and so the devil
wins this hand

Winning poem in the category "HIV and AIDS".

Heather Slade is a mother of two. A multiple category winner, she is recovering from a long battle with mental illness. Her poetry is a way for her to heal and to communicate with the outside world. She has said that her associations with Our Voice, as a writer, and with the Songs of the Street Art Foundation have been a life saver in terms of making contact with other people.

My Heart Roars

by Heather Slade

The drums start
slowly at first
then
with the increasing urgency
and strength

the accompanying cry
or song

everyone hears it differently

beats against my heart
and heavens door

eons and echoes of pain
and joy
age
and worship

I hear it all
feel it banging on my chest

rushing through my body
riding crests of heart beats.

Closing my eyes
I see ancestors celebrating new life
and others weeping as they bury their dead.

They are in me, as I was in them
the drums call me beyond the precepts of time
While some may soar
ethereal in their experiences
my body reacts fully
and corporeally.

I have always been
and will continue
in the heart beat
of the sacred drums.

Reprinted with permission from Songs of the Street, edited by Linda Dumont, Edmonton: The Songs of the Street Art Foundation, 2000.

Open City Productions 2002, Montreal

Open City Productions 2002 is a non-profit community arts organization that promotes public awareness of social issues through the arts. Founded in 1991, it continues to create art programs centered on issues surrounding homelessness, youth, racism, violence against women, and marginalization.

Open City Productions 2002 is based in Montreal but has partners across Canada and in South Africa. It has worked with The Centre for Literacy for the past two years at this community writing event at Blue Metropolis.

Ken and colleagues set up empty canvases in the hotel hallway and invited festival attendees to pick up a paint brush and leave their mark. By the end of the day, we had murals of riotous colour, images and streams of words. The canvases become part of Open City's collection of community art.

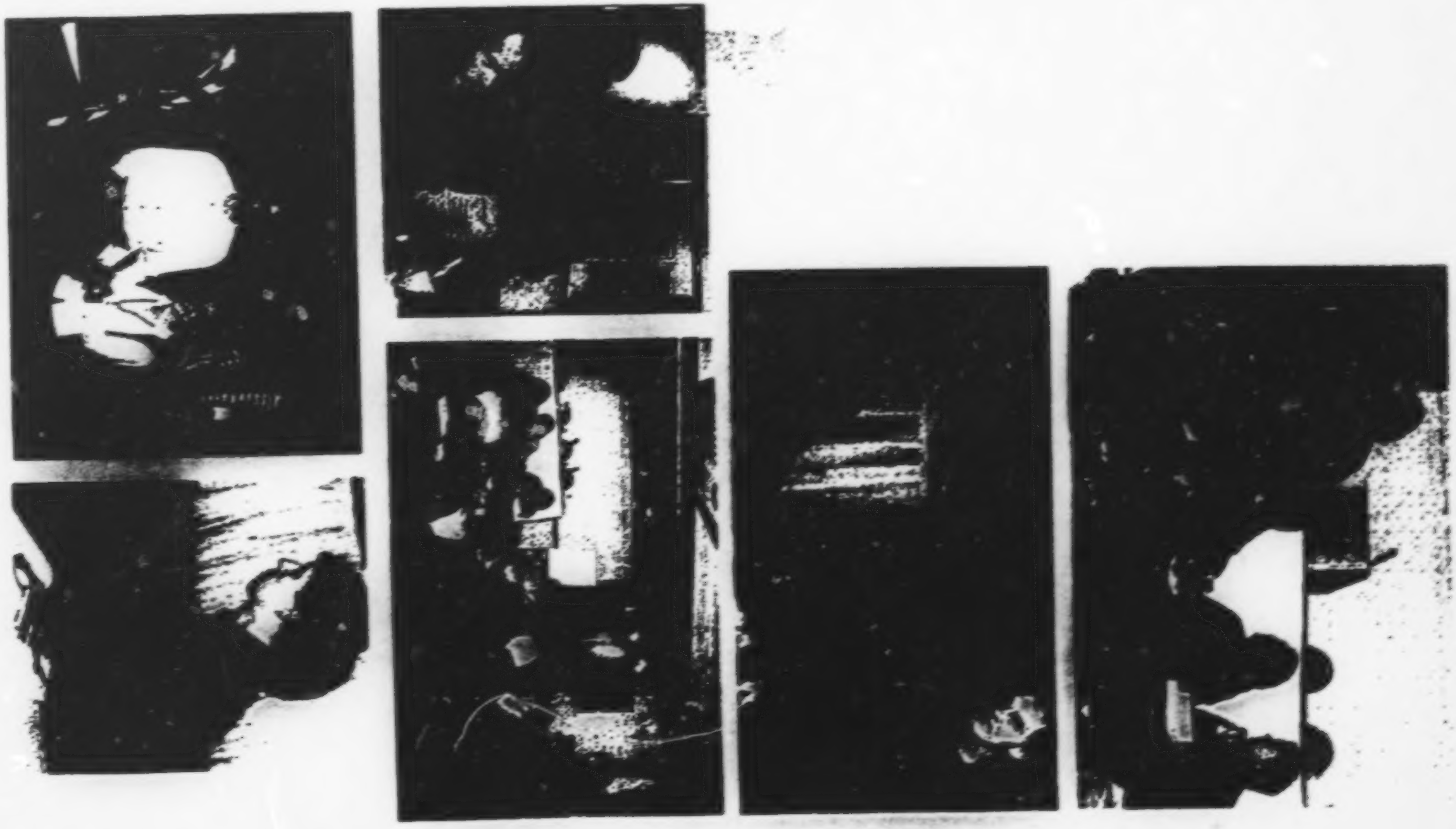
Ken McLaughlin is a photographer/writer currently working as National Projects Coordinator at Open City Productions 2002.

Ken McLaughlin

Street of the
BLUE METROPOLIS
our
voices
be
TEARS CANNOT BE TRANSLATED OF
Stree

BLUE METROPOLIS 2001

CITY OF WORDS • CITÉ DES MOTS



Literacy and the homeless
April 12, 2001

This event was organized by The Centre for Literacy of Quebec in collaboration with Blue Metropolis, and funded by the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada.

Community contacts from Grassroots 2001

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Quebec H3H 2M8
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www.blue-met-bleu.com/

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The Street Post,
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North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA)
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Directory of North American Street Newspaper
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www.opencity.ca

The Centre for Literacy
www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Further reading: Selected resources available from The Centre.

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Women and literacy:
Issues of race, class, and culture

An international conference on women and literacy hosted by the Center for the Study of Adult Literacy at Georgia State University was held in Atlanta on January 22- 24, 2001, co-sponsored by Laubach Literacy Action and by The Centre for Literacy of Quebec. Women from the US, Canada, Caribbean and other countries continued discussions begun at previous conferences over the past four years, with a focus on race, class and culture as factors that shape literacy. These notes from presentations at the opening session reflect the textured dialogue as the panelists drew on concrete personal experience as well as formal research to enlarge a collective understanding of how these factors work in our lives and why they are generally ignored in public policy. [LS]

Opening comments by:

Vanessa Sheared, Associate Dean, College of Education, San Francisco State University

On welfare reform and African-American women

Vanessa Sheared takes her point of departure from what she calls her own "miseducation" as a black woman, referring to a 1933 book by Carter Woodson entitled *The Miseducation of the Negro*. Woodson's thesis was that inferiority taught in the classroom killed the aspirations of black children.

As the child of a welfare mother, Sheared swore that she would never be on welfare herself, yet has had to go on twice during her life. Giving a brief history of welfare in the US, she reminded listeners that welfare was originally intended for white women, and that until the 1960s, laws prevented African-American women from getting it. How, then, she asked, have we come to the present when welfare is identified with black single mothers? Sheared underlined how a language of deficit is used to shape public opinion, for example, in using the term "single parent" rather than "family." She noted how welfare data are usually cited in terms of numbers getting off welfare, but how rarely policy makers look at what happened to these women. The system works against women ever really moving out of poverty. If middle class women can work and raise families, why should women on welfare not be able to do the same? Sheared argues that welfare reform has mainly pushed women into jobs that perpetuate poverty. She asks us to examine our own histories, not just those of recipients of assistance. The system needs to be dismantled, Sheared suggests, if we hope to change the reality for most of the women caught in the welfare/poverty cycle. These issues have to be taken into account in curriculum as well. Whose needs are we serving? Sheared asks. Literacy cannot be addressed in isolation from these larger questions.

> *...welfare was originally intended for white women, and ... until the 1960s, laws prevented African-American women from getting it.*

Women and literacy: Issues of race, class, and culture

Elizabeth Hayes, Researcher, University of Wisconsin

On being a "white ally"

Coming from a state where welfare reform has driven many women off welfare and out of literacy classes, Elizabeth Hayes offered some insight into the tensions and uncertainties that arise from being a white academic engaged in research with black welfare recipients in Milwaukee. Hayes described the "work first" philosophy as a form of oppression. Most of us, she notes, have fallen into careers. Yet, we expect that women in welfare programs follow a model "plan" in career choice. She spoke of the challenge of letting go of our attachment to being colour-blind and of avoiding generalizations. Hayes cautions on the persistent tendency to generalize: "Oh, you white women like..."; "Oh, you black women like..." She defines being colour-blind as a white liberal assumption that we can work with people of any race and ignore the racial tensions, or deny the privilege that comes with middle-class whiteness. Hayes feels that only in acknowledging racial tensions, can we then work together. We have to keep reflecting on the diversity in every racial group. It is so easy, she says, to take on the role of white ally and misrepresent the complexity. "All of us, despite our colour, can promote racism."

Nancy Cooper, AlphaPlus Centre, Toronto

On reclaiming language and culture

Nancy Cooper's mother was native. But Cooper, raised Irish working class, did not learn about her heritage until she went to university. Part of a generation of natives who went through Canadian government-funded residential schooling, her mother had been schooled to be ashamed of who she was and had chosen not to raise her own children as native. Shame, Cooper says, was used to eradicate culture. However, Cooper speaks as part of a generation reclaiming language and culture. Aboriginal communities across Canada are creating "culture-based literacy," the principles of which respect the spirit and culture of the people while recognizing the need to work in the dominant culture.
It values the knowledge of learners. Cooper described some of the initiatives through which this process is being traced. They include the native Ningwakwe Learning Press, a national aboriginal design committee developing a national organization, and provincial efforts such the Ontario Alpharoute project that is creating a culture-based on-line learning environment.

Julie Perilla, Department of Psychology, Georgia State University

On culture, family violence and critical literacy

Julie Perilla is a privileged Latina who feels a responsibility to use the privilege of her education in her own community. She does this through her work with families and violence. Her status as a grandmother gives her a respect that would not be accorded to a young woman. If you talk about women in Latina culture, Perilla notes, you talk about family.

Ningwakwe Learning Press

is dedicated to developing and providing Native learning materials and services that are culturally appropriate for Native people.

Ningwakwe Learning Press was established as an independent organization in January 2000. It assumed the role and function formerly performed by Ningwakwe Clearing House (NCH) which became a division of the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition in 1994. The evolvement of NCH was in **response to a need - a need** of learning materials specific to the Native service stream. In the intervening years, the focus of NCH has been directed at producing and distributing appropriate materials that:

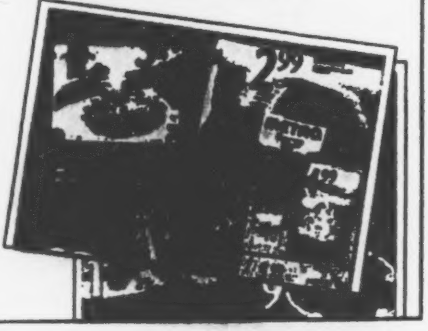
- involve a wholistic approach to learning – addressing the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical;
- are culture-based, reflecting the contemporary realities of, and are geared to, adult Native learners;
- consider Native literacy as a tool which empowers the spirit of Native people as part of a lifelong path of learning; and
- contribute to self-knowledge and critical thinking of the individual.

Source: **www.ningwakwe.on.ca**

extended family. She sees domestic violence as a violation of human rights with close similarities to terrorism in the creation of a psychological and physical atmosphere of intimidation from which there appears to be no escape. Culture, she says, has been used too often as a way to justify violence. Perilla also questions our models in dealing with victims of violence. We say "We'll show you," "We'll rescue you," " This is what you should do..." "You have to decide to do it.." An alternative, she suggest, is to use a Freirian approach to help the victim understand the environment and his/her own history, to move toward critical consciousness. Taking a participatory approach in her own community, Perilla has worked for eleven years with a group of women and children; after a few years, the women wanted to know why they were not working with the men, so she began a men's group. Perilla describes an egalitarian relationship between teacher and student as fellow journeyers; she walks with her, supports her, helps her see her options, understand the laws and identify resources. This is transformative literacy.

Food circulars—a liberation tool

The weekly circulars from grocery stores and other retailers are a rich, inexpensive source of teaching materials. From them, a teacher can pick out key words, letter-sound relations, numbers, simple math operations, all intimately tied to the daily lives and needs of learners. They are free, published in colour weekly, and delivered to the home. Everyday materials are used in many classrooms. But to hear Aubra Love describe them as "liberation tools" that can be used to camouflage the intention of teaching literacy highlighted the fact that literacy is considered a threat by those who wish to oppress and control.



Aubra Love, Pastor, Director of Black Church and Domestic Violence Program United Church, Atlanta

On food circulars as tools for liberation

Aubra Love had listeners puzzled when she placed a stack of food circulars on every table. But like great pastors everywhere, she soon made her point through a well-told tale. Love shared the poignant story of a friend whose mother never helped them with their homework when they went to her house after school. One day, her friend confided that her mother couldn't read or write and that her father held tight control. Love's own mother was an ABE instructor who had also written a dissertation on racial discrimination in Boston schools. When she heard about the friend's mother, she devised a way to teach the woman how to read. She created a neighbourhood Discount Grocery Club with a group of women combing the food circulars for bargains. All the husband knew was that his wife and her friends were finding ways to save him money on the weekly groceries. Over time, the neighbour learned to read. The moral of the story — the tools of liberation are all around us. A great teacher knows how to use them. [See BOX] Pastor Love was not being simplistic or naive. She wanted to illustrate the difficulties of cross-cultural education that often causes humiliation. In her example, she says the bonds of race and community were necessary to the learning. From the perspective of the black community, she explained, a woman leaving her community for education might find herself branded a traitor. On another note, Love observed that domestic violence can also manifest itself in marital rape and family size, often a means of control in poorly educated families. Referring to Jenny Horsman's definition of oppression as an attack on the body, Love concluded that any form of oppression makes it difficult for someone not to be "too scared to learn."

Work on women and literacy at The Center for the Study of Adult Literacy, Georgia State University, can be found at www.education.gsu.edu/csal/

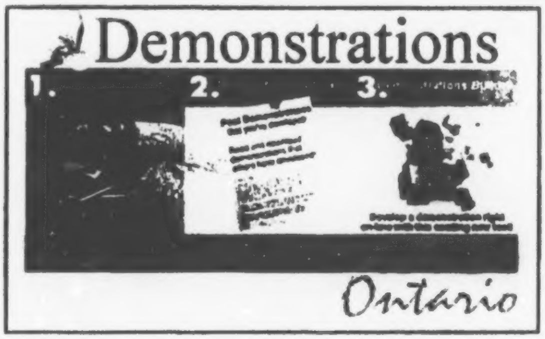
MUDWorks! Making and Using Demonstrations

Demonstrations Ontario

Notes from the Ontario Literacy Coalition conference [LS]
May 10 - 12, 2001

As part of its move to a learning outcomes model for literacy and basic skills (LBS), Ontario has created resources and training to support providers. The LBS Program aims to provide learner-centred training in a context that reflects a learner's goal. Demonstrations Ontario (http://demonstrations.alphaplus.ca) is a web site designed to help providers develop and apply learning outcomes demonstrations that measure the ability of adults to successfully integrate and apply various elements of their literacy learning to everyday life.

At the May conference of the Ontario Literacy Coalition, practitioner/developers Jane Barber and Mike Kelly launched Demonstrations Ontario, and gave a sample introductory workshop and a progress report on the professional development of LBS teachers in provincial school boards. According to Barber, the 5-hour training program, funded by the National Literacy Secretariat, has been given to all instructors in 100% of the boards. The project gave every program a scanner and technical training to scan and shrink images. Access to authentic forms encountered in daily life, is offered through a digitized bank of 98 workplace forms in the HRDC Essential Skills Profile. The Profile can also be used by learners to see what skills they need for particular jobs.



MUD represents the best of what is currently being done with the web to support teachers and learners, including providing a quality tool kit and templates that allow individualizing of demonstrations in terms of Individualized Learning Plans.

The Demonstrations Ontario website will offer ongoing support under three categories:

Demonstrations Bank
Teachers can review and download more than 100 demonstrations developed by the Simcoe County Literacy Network in the early part of the project. In PDF format, they can be viewed by level, by domain, and by sector, and in some cases, have been linked to the HRDC Essential Skills Profile. Sir Sanford Fleming Community College has created 100 workplace demonstrations. These have not been weeded. They appear as they were created.

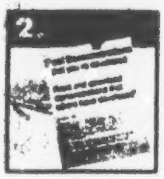
Understanding demonstrations

A demonstration is an activity or an integrated set of activities that is performed by a learner to show progress toward a goal.

The purpose of demonstrations is to see how learners are able to apply the learning as required by a real-life task that is integrated and requires transfer of knowledge to a different situation. Demonstrations resemble and build upon the learning activities the learner undertakes as part of the training program, and enable learners to apply a number of integrated skills to perform a practical task.

Demonstration activities are key to the assessment process because they show progress toward the goals outlined in the learner's training plan. Accurately tracking the success of learners in carrying out demonstration activities is critical when considering the learner's progress toward an identified goal.

Source: Demonstrations Ontario



Demonstrations Board

This part of the site, still under construction, will eventually allow teachers to post demonstrations that they have developed and to read and download those developed by others. At the moment, the creators are working through concerns about security, quality and copyright [See commentaries in BOXES]. In a recent survey of the field, Mike Kelly says teachers asked for some type of quality control on the site. Most said they would feel more comfortable if a group of peers had looked over submissions and requested revisions where needed. A quality tool kit is already up.

Demonstrations Builder

This part of the site, being developed by the Peel-Halton-Dufferin Learning Network, will guide teachers through a step-by-step process in creating a demonstration. It has been started with reading, writing and math, but will add more later. It will give instructors a way to put in their own authentic materials, as well as a way to save and submit student assessments directly and to report differently if the context demands it.

Issue: Should literacy materials be submitted to quality checks?

This is a thorny question. Until now, there has been a consensus that because there were insufficient ABE materials, anything produced should be made available to be winnowed by the field. Using the word "quality" biases the issue. Who would say that they did not want "quality" materials? Those who argue that the web is a medium with the potential for democratizing education, fear that establishing quality control is a form of censorship or gate keeping, another way of creating a new orthodoxy. Control requires controllers. On the other hand, as in all professional fields, there is not enough time or inclination for everyone to review everything produced. Peer panels are an accepted and trusted way of maintaining standards. Despite some potential for abuse, most professionals trust that they will get to hear most of the best of what is thought and produced in their field. Establishing quality control may be a sign that literacy/ABE is a maturing field. [LS]

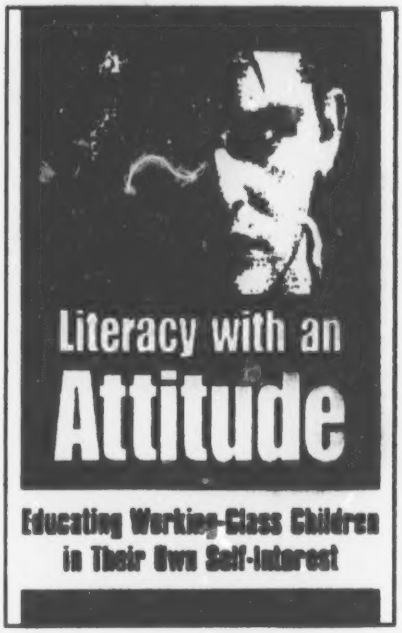
Copyright and literacy materials

For more than a decade, organizations and agencies across Canada have been creating literacy materials to serve a field that has historically been notoriously impoverished. Many of the groups and individuals who have contributed to a rich bank of national and local materials were never previously involved in writing or publishing. Today, as digitization becomes widespread, copyright has surfaced as an issue. While much of the production has been funded through the NLS, neither they nor most provincial partners have clearly laid out the conditions governing copyright. Consequently, some authors with the best of intentions and through naiveté have "borrowed" liberally from published materials without following copyright regulations; others have not understood who owns the materials created. Demonstrations Ontario is among the first programs in Canada to acknowledge and address this situation. In their quality tools, they counsel creators to respect copyright. They should probably develop a full guide on how to do this. Federal and provincial funders, when they approve a publication project, should clarify issues of ownership, reproduction rights, and respect of copyright in using previously published materials. Models exist in other government departments and funding agencies. If the goal is to get these materials into the public domain for use in the field, that must be spelled out in the agreement. [LS]

Literacy and working-class children

A review of Patrick J. Finn, *Lit-eracy with an Attitude: Educating Working-Class Children in Their Own Self-Interest.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, 243 pp.

by David Dillon, Faculty of Education, McGill University



Patrick Finn has written a flawed but extremely important book. The flaw is that the book does not deliver what it advertises, namely, an examination of a radically different, transformative approach to literacy education based on a critical view of schooling. That alternative view emerges only toward the end of the book, and only one chapter looks at actual alternative practice in North American classrooms. So, while he eventually provides historical and theo-retical background to this alter-native approach, he falls short in offering a detailed description of actual classroom applications and a thorough discussion of the embedded issues.

What Finn has effectively accomplished is to articulate in a readable and accessible way a broad explanation of how schooling, in the words of Ivan Illich, "schools children into their places in society" and thus actually achieves — with extremely powerful subtlety — its conserving role of reproducing the social status quo. In so doing, Finn makes a very important contribution to the ongoing debate about literacy education. He moves well beyond the usual methodological debate about traditional versus progressive methods of literacy education. Instead, he orients us to schooling — and literacy — from a critical (i.e., political) social and cultural perspective that changes the debate infundamental ways. In essence, he shifts the question from what method to use to teach literacy to what kind of literacy to teach. As Paulo Freire pointed out, the key issue in education is not achieving literacy, but rather what kind of literacy is achieved — domesticating or liberating. Finn articulates a message similar to that of other critical pedagogues such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, and Stanley Aronowitz, but in a readable and accessible style. In offering classroom, school, and community detail, he allows us to see how this subtle discrimination actually works.

Finn's approach is creative and effective. Rather than surveying and summarizing a large number of studies in typical academic style, he chooses a small number of key studies that have influenced our understanding and weaves their findings into a broad and coherent theory. He describes their findings in great "slice-of-life" detail that takes us right into the complex, gritty reality of classrooms and schools in almost story-like fashion [See BOX p. 39].

However, the reader wants to know what kind of alternative approach might result in marginalized students actually identifying with school and wanting what school could offer. It is precisely on this aspect that the book does too little. Readers who wish to pursue the answer to this question will have to consult other books such as Ira Shor's *Empowering Education* or edited books such as *Teaching for Social Justice* by Ayers, Hunt, and Quinn.

Nevertheless, Finn's book is still very important and deserves to be read by teachers — since all levels of schooling can be affected by these "subtle mechanisms" — by parents, and by concerned citizens. In fact, Finn himself expresses more hope for changes in schooling arising from the awareness and pressure of parents than from change originating within the schooling system.

Finally, despite the flaws, this book makes important contributions to the ongoing debate about literacy education.

- Most obviously, Finn exposes the "subtle mechanisms" at work in mainstream schooling that have such powerful discriminatory effects. This charge of bias has been leveled at schooling for some time, yet it is only in recent decades that research has begun to reveal in some detail how schools actually accomplish this effect through their "normal", unquestioned practices. Finn makes this research accessible to a broad readership.

Finn's theoretical synthesis of working-class education and literacy

- Some minorities feel they have been wronged by mainstream Americans and that "acting white" is a betrayal of their people. They develop what sociologists refer to as "oppositional identity." Oppositional identity appears among working class whites to some extent as well. Talking and acting like a school teacher and valuing things school teachers value doesn't win you a lot of friends in working-class communities.
- Working class children with varying degrees of oppositional identity resist school through means reminiscent of the factory shop floor—slowdowns, strikes, sabotage, and occasionally open confrontation. The result is the "pretend-school model." Teachers ask little of students in return for enough cooperation to maintain the appearance of conducting school.
- The discourse (ways of communication and the beliefs, attitudes, habits, and behaviors that underlie them—especially attitudes related to authority, conformity, and power) of working class communities is at odds with the discourse of the schools. This makes acquisition of school discourse and powerful literacy difficult for working-class children.
- Progressive methods, empowering education, and powerful literacy tend to go together. Traditional methods, domesticating education, and functional literacy tend to go together. Progressive methods are nearly impossible unless children want school knowledge and cooperate.

Patrick J. Finn. *Literacy with an Attitude: Educating Working-Class Children in Their Own Self-Interest.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, (pp. x-xi)

- In addition, he helps focus attention on the issue of social class. Unfortunately, it is an issue too often overshadowed —and obscured — by issues of race/ethnicity, gender, and ability, despite the established evidence that students' social class background is perhaps the strongest correlate of school success and levels of educational attainment in our schooling system.
- In a broader and more profound way, Finn helps shift the framework of the debate about literacy education, essentially providing a critical social perspective on schooling and literacy, based on notions of "culture," "identity," and particularly "power" (with associated notions of "acculturation," "resistance," and "liberation").
- Above all, like Freire, he highlights the essentially political nature of schooling — and the impossibility of being neutral within the system. Everything we do as educators either helps support the traditionally unequal and reproductive nature of schooling or helps change it toward a more just and empowering experience for all. He shares a telling anecdote about the reactions of teachers with whom he works to some accounts of teachers practicing "literacy with an attitude" in their classrooms. They almost always exclaim, "You can't do that in school! It's too political!" As Finn rightly points out, not engaging in alternative pedagogical practice is also political —but in a conserving, discriminatory way.

David Dillon is a professor in the Faculty of Education, McGill University. He is currently chairperson of the board of The Centre for Literacy.

The Annual Review of Adult Learning and Literacy, Volume 2

National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)
Jossey-Bass, March 2001

For each volume in this series, the editors have commissioned an historical overview and assessment of current trends in literacy and ABE in an English-speaking country. Volume 2 has a chapter on Canada. Included among the topics in the other 7 chapters are a review of US developments in literacy, a discussion of organizational development in ABE programs, and a comparison of ABE professional development models in several states. For chapter summaries and an order form, go to **www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/ann_rev/chptrsumm.html**

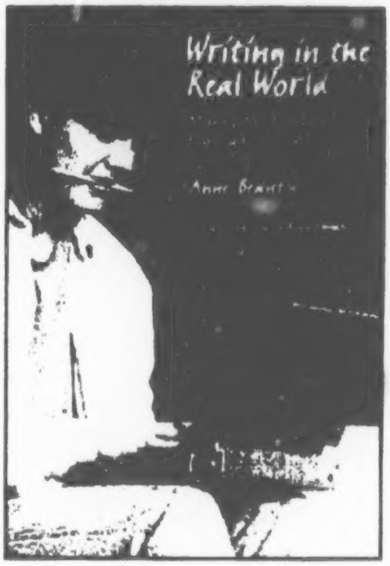
REVIEWS

A different slant on workplace literacy: Writing in a non-profit agency

A review of *Writing in the Real World, Making the Transition from School to Work*, by Anne Beaufort, foreword by Shirley Brice Heath. New York and London: Teachers College Press, 1999.

by Linda Shohet

This book explores a different aspect of workplace literacy than we usually associate with the term. For her doctoral thesis, Anne Beaufort conducted an ethnographic study of the conditions and processes that influence the way people write in a non-profit organization. Most studies of workplace writing have focused on professions such as engineering or medicine. Beaufort spent time observing and recording the routine of an under-funded Job Resource Center. Beside providing insight into the way that writing (often collaboratively) is done, she offers a close-to-the-bone portrait of the daily strains and stresses in a typical non-profit milieu. She documents the ways that employees learn on the job to write in unfamiliar genres (grant applications, project reports, press releases, fund-raising appeals) and includes some templates that have been developed at the organization to help employees get it right. From the perspective of a literacy organization administrator, you will recognize the scenes. [See excerpts]



Excerpts from Writing in the Real World:

- *It's frustrating, I work, I write under conditions that I'm not used to which is that I have tons of interruptions and I have a million things on my mind.* When I was in school I had a habit of just sitting in a café in the corner for hours to do my writing.... In this room, there's always people coming and going, the phone rings all the time. (Ursula, 7/14/92, p.1, emphasis added) (21)

- It's one of these atmospheres where things come up and everyone wants to deal with it and talk about it or whatever, then people just can interrupt you in the middle of anything and say, "Oh, can I interrupt? I have to...." You know.... they want to talk about it right here, right then.... *It's just constant interruptions around here.* (Pam, 3/16/92, pp.2-3, emphasis added) (22)

- I was just trying to write a simple letter ...and I could not think of how to say, write that letter, shoot ...*and I had like this major block then just when I think of something the phone would ring or somebody would ask me a question*, somebody comes to the Macintosh and they don't know how to use the Macintosh and its just, my blood pressure was coming out of my head, 'cause I can't, I can't concentrate. (Ursula, 1/12/93, p.8, emphasis added) (22)

- *For me it takes a great deal of discipline to sit down and write and tune everything out* and ... try to concentrate on only what I'm doing when there's a lot of other things going on that I know need to be taken care of. We have some program problems.... *It's hard to block those things out and just think about what you're writing.* I mean it happens when you're in school too. It definitely happened to me in school too, but when it's work and there's money tied up to it and a deadline and all that stuff, somehow to me there's more pressure. (Selma, 11/24/92, pp.11-12, emphasis added) (23)

Each of the writers developed her own way of handling this obstacle to writing. Pam went to a nearby restaurant to get her thoughts organized. Selma stayed home some days to write. Ursula stayed after hours to work when the phones had quit ringing or came in on a Saturday morning. But writing had to be accomplished at the office during business hours too, so they all needed to learn the mental discipline of keeping their train of thought in the midst of interruptions. Pam noticed this skill in her boss and other project directors: "When stuff like that

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comes up, they just stop whatever they're doing, deal with the issue, and then try to go back and focus" (3/16/93, p3) (23) (Author)

Another aspect of the physical environment supported writing, though. The same people who interrupted and caused one to lose a sentence forming in the mind could serve as sounding boards to bounce ideas off in the brainstorming stages of a writing project, or would read a piece of writing in draft stage and offer editing suggestions. Someone was always around to read a piece, and all four writers relied on other to catch typographical errors, awkward phrasing, or grammatical errors....(23) (Author)

A long way to go: Canadian literacy policy and programs

Review of *Patterns of Participation in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs*, Results of a Follow-up Study by Ellen Long with Sandy Middleton
ABC CANADA in partnership with Literacy BC

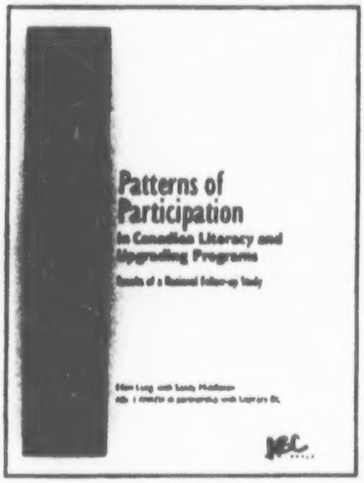
Who tries to access adult literacy and upgrading programs, for what reasons, who actually enrols, and how do they fare once they begin? *Patterns of Participation* is the most comprehensive Canadian study to date of this subject and adds to a small but thoughtful international literature.*

A preview of this study entitled *Who Wants to Learn?* was circulated at the National Summit in October 2000 and highlighted in the last issue of *LACMF* (15.1). The full study presents an excellent literature review, a description of the methodology used in this study and detailed interpretations of the data collected. They reveal the complexity of motives that drive participation and how far removed most policy and programs are from answering the needs [see BOX]. The findings fly in the face of a recent Ontario policy decision to test welfare recipients on reading and math and force those who fail into classes.

As suggested in much of the literature, Long and Middleton found that participants were generally influenced by three clusters of factors that they have called socioeconomic-circumstantial, cognitive-emotive, and program-and-policy related, all of which are defined. Still, they caution that patterns "are not easily compartmentalized." Multiple factors are likely to affect a person simultaneously. They present this study as "a significant step" in the research that "should direct us toward shaping clear theoretical models and integrated explanations of participation in literacy programs." The body of credible Canadian research on adult literacy is beginning to take shape. *Patterns of Participation* is a significant contribution to the entire field.

A set of recommendations following from but not included in this publication will be published later this year. [LS]

Report: **www.abc-canada.org**
Recommendations:
E-mail: **elong@interlog.com**


Patterns of Participation
in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs

Access in Canada

There is a serious problem with access to literacy and upgrading education in Canada. While literacy may be more on the public agenda than ever before, it is nevertheless not at a level to fundamentally shift the rates of adult literacy in Canada. The current demand, to say nothing of the potential demand, is not being met.
...
The shocking statistic is perhaps no longer how many Canadians have low literacy skills, but rather how few are being helped by the country's current service delivery mechanisms. And yet, it is encouraging that more than three-quarters of those who dropped out or didn't enroll in the first place said they would seek help again in the future. Much needs to be done to ensure a more positive picture when they do call again.

Patterns of Participation, Chapter Five, p.77

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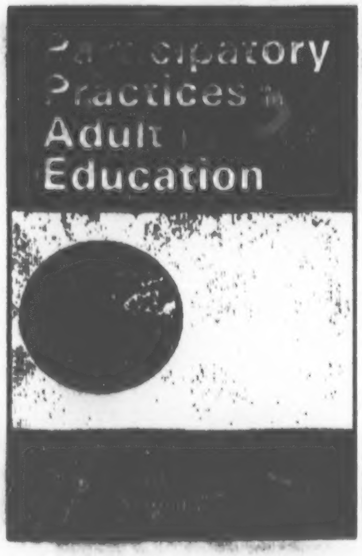
* The 1996 Winter Institute, sponsored by The Centre for Literacy in collaboration with the Georgia Tech Lifelong Learning Network, in Atlanta, focused entirely on participation and drew heavily on research by Hal Beder and Tom Valentine. Researcher Liz Dillon Black prepared a bibliography that we published in Volume 11, No.4. The lead article on participation is available on our web site under Newsletter Archive. **www.nald.ca/litcent.htm**

Participatory Practices in Adult Education



edited by Pat Campbell and
Barbara Burnaby
Mahwah, NJ; Lawrence Erlbaum
Associates, Inc.; 2001, 318 pp. US
$34.50.

The concluding chapter of this collection might have provided the title. In "The Many Faces of Participatory Adult Education," co-editor Barbara Burnaby starts by explaining her personal struggle to understand some educational labels such as participatory "that seem to emanate out of a (set of) core principle(s) but that do not seem to have boundaries and are not as easy to define" (p.307). She then works back from the thirteen chapters to try and tease out the distinguishing characteristics of the diverse practices that have been called "participatory."

Acknowledging that she and co-editor Pat Campbell did not set out to demonstrate particularly representative participatory education practices in North America, they put the book together simply by calling on colleagues who they felt were engaged in the practice. This disclaimer may be a touch disingenuous on Burnaby's part, since she and Campbell included some of the best-known practitioners in various branches of adult education—ABE, ESL, literacy, community education, workplace, university and prisons. Among the contributors are Deborah Barndt, Virginia Sauve, Jenny Horsman, Mary Norton, Sue Folinsbee, Elsa Auerbach, Andrea Nash, to name only a few of those most familiar to Canadians. Every chapter, told as a story of practice and reflection in a different context, adds valuable perspective and "helps to firm up the concept", as Burnaby suggests.

One of the defining characteristics she discovers among the examples is the presence of activities and the relationships that learners must change. Many of the situations involve a move from positions of marginalization to ones of greater decision-making or control. Because "disparities in degrees of control exist in every situation," she suggests that we probably overlook many forms of participatory education all around us. She notes the questions that arise about kinds and degrees of participation, about who initiates and who tells the stories, and about the complex relationships among facilitators, participants and organizations. She concludes that all the examples demonstrate that giving over or sharing control and responsibility for learning with the learners is a "potent force" and that participatory education "has much more potential than is being realized."

What she does not explore fully is the extent to which a facilitator or teacher has to be pre-disposed to the philosophy or introduced through teacher training or in-service professional development to the possibilities of participatory education. It will take some serious change in program funding and policy before such practice becomes mainstream. By showing so many faces of reflective participatory practice, this book could certainly inspire a move in this direction. [LS]

To order:
Canadians order through
a distributor.
See **www.orders@erlbaum.com**
for information.

INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR LITERACY RESEARCH

CALL FOR PAPERS (in English and French)
Deadline: **December 31, 2001**

For the fifth time since 1991, the UNESCO Institute for Education is offering an Award in honour of an outstanding research work in adult literacy. The competition, open to researchers all over the world, is supported the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS), Human Resources Development Canada

Details can be accessed at
http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/news/award.shtml

CHRONOLOGICAL CONFERENCE LISTING

Local

Montreal Intercultural Storytelling Festival
October 19 - 28, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information: (514) 937-7046

Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec (LDAQ)
27th Annual Conference
March 21 - 23, 2002
Montreal, QC
Information: LDAQ,
Tel.: (514) 847-1324;
Fax: (514) 281-5187;
www.aqeta.qc.ca
E-mail: aqeta@sympatico.ca

Blue Metropolis Literary Festival
April 4 - 8, 2002
Montreal, QC
Information: 2100 Guy St.,
#106, Montreal, QC, H3H 2M8
Tel: (514) 932-1112;
Fax: (514) 932-1148;
www.blue-met-bleu.com;
E-mail: josee.matte@Blue-met-bleu.com

Springboards 2002 Annual Conference of the Association of Teachers of English of Quebec (ATEQ)
April 25 – 26, 2002
Montreal, QC
Information: Fax: 514-398-4529

National /International

27th Wyoming Conference on English
June 19 - 23, 2001
University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY
Information:
Website: http://august.uwyo.edu/english/index.htm
Amy Hollister, English Department,
Box 3353, Laramie, WY,
82071-3353
Telephone: 307-766-5113
or 766-6486
Email: amyh@uwyo.edu

Computers and Advanced Technology in Education (CATE) '01
June 27 - 29, 2001
Banff, AB
Information: IASTED Secretariat,
#80, 4500 16th Ave. N.W., Calgary,
AB, Canada, T3B 0M6;
Tel: (403)-288-1195;
E-mail: calgary@iasted.com;
Web site: www.iasted.com

National Writing and Thinking Network Workshops for High School Students
July 2001
Information: Judi Smith, Bard College, PO Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 125504-5000,
Tel.: (914) 758-7484;
E-mail: jsmith@badr.edu

The Media Studies Conference
July 4 - 6, 2001
The National Film Theatre, South bank, London
British Film Institute, The Media Studies Conference 2001, bfi Education Projects, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN, U.K.

WPA Workshop 2001
July 8 - 12, 2001
Tempe, Phoenix, AZ
Information :
Telephone : 513-529-1901
Email : daikerda@muohio.edu

IAIMTE 2001 Third International Conference Theory and Practice in the Teaching and Learning of Language and Literature
July 11 - 13, 2001
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Information:
E-mail: Braaksma@ilo.uva.nl ;
Web site:
www.ilo.uva.nl/projecten/iaimte

A Gathering about Literacy: Research in Practice
July 25 - 27, 2001
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
Information: 403-297-4995
Website: www.nald.ca (click on Events – National)

Developing an Adult Literacy Journal in Canada: A Consultation
July 28, 2001
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
Information: Tracy Westell at twestell@idirect.ca

12th Annual Whole Language Umbrella Conference
July 26 - 29, 2001
Chicago, IL
Information: www.ncte.org/wlu

Health and Literacy Action Conference
September 7 – 8, 2001
St. John's NF
Information: Health and Literacy Action Conference, Division of Communtiy Health, Memorial University of Newfoundland,
St. John's NF. A1B 3V6,
E-mail: murraym@mun.ca

13th International Conference on Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
September 27 - 29, 2001
Halifax, NS
Information: Paige McDicken, Conference coordinator, Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia; Tel: (902) 423-2850;
Web site: www.nsnet.org/ldans/2001;
E-mail: ldans@ns.sympatico.ca

Miami University Composition Studies in the 21st Century
October 5 - 7, 2001
Oxford, OH
Information: Composition Studies in the 21st Century, Department of English, Miami University, Oxford, OH, 45056 USA
E-mail: daikerda@muohio.edu

CONFERENCE LISTING

Seizing the Moment: A Popular Education Gathering
October 12 - 15, 2001
Toronto, ON
Information: Catalyst Centre,
720 Bathurst St., Suite 500,
Toronto, ON M5S 2R4
Tel.: (416) 516-9546
Fax: (416) 588-5725
Website: www.catalystcentre.ca
Email: catalystcentre@web.net

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA)
October 17 - 20, 2001
Albuquerque, NM
Information:
Tel.: (315) 472-0001 ext. 201
E-Mail : info@literacyvolunteers.org
Website : www.literacyvolunteers.org/conference

50th Annual Conference: The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
October 17 - 21, 2001
Baltimore, MD, USA
Information: Daphne Mathews,
18800 Roxbury Road, Hagerstown,
MD, USA 21746
Tel: 301-918-1913
Email: aaace10@aol.com

2001: A Literacy Odyssey
November 1 - 3, 2001
Edmonton, AB
Information: The Provincial Literary Conference, 3827-51st Street,
Edmonton, AB T6L 2J3
Phone: (780)450-2856
Fax: (780)466-8059
E-mail:
margaret_eastwood@aaal.ab.ca

Getting in Touch with Literacy Fifth Biennial Conference
November 8 - 11, 2001
Philadelphia, PA
Information: Debby Holzapfel,
GTLC Program Chair, Western Instructional Support Center,
5347 William Flynn Highway,
Gibsonia, PA, 15004
E-Mail: holzapfel@wisc.org

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
November 15 - 20, 2001
Baltimore, MD
Information: www.ncte.org
Telephone : 800-369-6283

Workplace Learning: Challenges and Opportunities Sixth Annual Conference
December 2, 2001
Chicago, Illinois
Information:
Workplace Learning Conference,
Center on Education and Work,
University of Wisconsin-Madison,
1025 West Johnson Street, Room 964,Madison, WI, USA 53706-1796;
Fax: (608) 262-3050.
Web site: www.cew.wisc.edu/workplace

Modern Language Association (MLA)
December, 27 - 30, 2001
New Orleans, LA
Information: MLA, 26 Broadway,
3rd floor, New York, NY
10004-1789
Tel.: (646) 576-5000;
Fax: (646) 458-0030;
Web site: www.mla.org

BETT: The Educational Technology Show
January 9 - 12, 2002
London, UK
Information: 020 7537 4997
Web site: www.bettshow.com

TESOL 2002
March 2002
Salt Lake City, UT, USA
Information:
Web site: www.tesol.edu
Email: info@tesol.org

CSUN 17th Annual International Conference on Technology and Persons with Disabilities
March 18 - 23, 2002
Los Angeles, CA, USA
Information: 18111 Nordhoff Street,
Building 11, Suite 103, Northridge,
CA 91330-8340
Tel: 818-677-2578;
Fax: 818-677-4929
Web site: www.csun.edu/cod/
Email: ctrdis@csun.edu

Conference on College Composition and Communication (4Cs)
March 20 - 23, 2002
Chicago, IL, USA
Information: NCTE, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL
61801-1096
Tel : 217-328-3870, ext. 203
Fax : 217-328-0977
Website : www.ncte.org

83rd Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association
April 1 - 5, 2002
New Orleans, LA
Information: Tel: 202-223-9485
Fax: 202-775-1824
Web site: www.aera.net

International Reading Association (IRA) 47th Annual Convention
April 28 - May 2, 2002
San Francisco, CA, USA
Information:
Web site: www.reading.org/2002/

Summer Institutes 2001

The Centre for Literacy & the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada Adult Literacy, Technology & Learning Disabilities
June 28 – 30, 2001
Montreal, QC
Information:
Tel.: (514) 931-8731, ext1415;
Fax: (514) 931-5181; E-mail:
literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca
Web site: www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Martha's Vineyard Summer Workshops 2001 Institute on Writing and Teaching
July 2001
Information: Becky Mallaghan,
Martha's Vineyard Summer Workshops, Department of English,
406 Holmes Hall, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115.
Tel.: (781) 373-3637;
E-mail: bmallagh@lynx.neu.edu ;
Web site: www.casdn.neu.edu/~english/gradx.htm

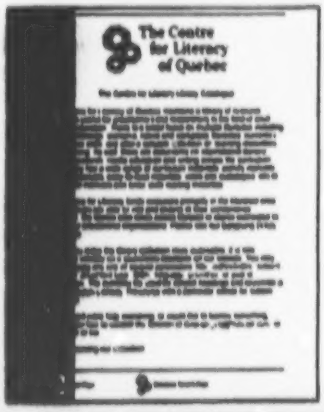
Institute for Writing and Thinking
July 8 - 13, 2001
Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
Information:
Judi Smith
Jsmith@Bard.edu

Our library catalogue is now on-line

Almost 5000 items of The Centre's resource collection are now on our web site in a searchable catalogue.

What's on-line?
The Centre's collection on adult literacy includes books, documents, serials, software, and audio-visual materials — of relevance to teachers, tutors, researchers, policy-makers, parents, and interested members of the public. There are two special collections, one on media literacy/education, and one on English-language materials created in Quebec through the IFPCA projects (Federal-Provincial Initiatives in Literacy.)

How to borrow
You can borrow our resources from anywhere in Canada using mail or courier provided you agree to pay the costs for distance borrowing. Details of our policy are on our site. Contact us by e-mail, telephone, or fax with your requests.



The Centre for Literacy of Quebec

Two ways to log on to our catalogue

1 Go to our home page (www.nald.ca/litcent.htm) and click on the Resources button in the left-hand panel, or

2 Go directly to the catalogue page (www.nald.ca/province/que/litcent/catalogue). You can search by title, author/editor, subject, keywords, ISBN, year of publication, publisher, language, or document type.

Health Literacy Centre Update

The Needs Assessment for a proposed Health Literacy Centre at the Montreal General Hospital (MUHC) was designed in two parts. The project is considering the needs of patients with low literacy, with cultural and second language barriers, and with cognitive and physical disabilities, all of whom we designated "hard-to-reach."

We have produced a Background Paper outlining the current state of health literacy initiatives in Canada and outside, providing the rationale for this study. It contains thumbnail descriptions of related programs and projects across Canada in the literacy and health sectors. A draft of this Paper was posted on our web site from May until June 12 with an invitation to comment and fill in gaps. The final document incorporating the information and feedback from colleagues will be completed by the end of June.

The second part of the assessment collected data from patients, health care professionals, support staff and family caregivers about the communication needs of "hard-to-reach" patients. The analysis of the findings will make connections to related research. It will also be completed in June with recommendations to the hospital and the MUHC. The paper with recommendations will be available later this summer on our web site. Preliminary analysis indicates that the word "literacy" is problematic for both patients and professionals, and that further initiatives will need to be renamed.

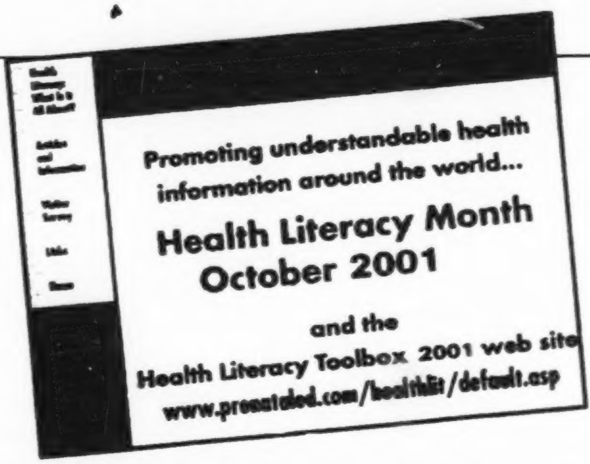
We expect to move into Phase II during 2001-2002 setting up pilot-projects in three hospital departments to test alternative approaches in communicating with the target groups. Watch our site for updates.

9.5

National Storysacks Project

The National Storysacks Project, funded by the Millennium Bureau, ended on March 31, 2001, with the groundwork laid to involve organizations across the country. The organizations that started the project are negotiating for funding to begin a new phase for three years.

In the meantime, you can find the general principles and some of the Canadian materials on the web site at www.storysacks.nald.ca. The Centre for Literacy is still carrying the original British materials and will work with Quebec groups who want to undertake local projects. We will know by the end of the summer whether there will be a new national project and, if so, what shape it will take.



Promoting understandable health information around the world...

Health Literacy Month
October 2001

and the
Health Literacy Toolbox 2001 web site
www.prenataled.com/healthlit/default.asp

Health Literacy Month

October 2001

For the second year, October has been declared Health Literacy Month by a coalition of health care and literacy providers. It is intended to raise awareness and to focus professional attention on the creation of understandable health information. To guide this work, a Health Literacy Toolbox is on-line at **www.prenataled.com/health/default/asp**. Organizers are also collecting and posting a list of activities.

Literacy and social justice in the US

A National Center for Literacy and Social Justice has been established in the US with a mission to build capacity among literacy practitioners to provide services that are responsive to adults with a history of educational low achievement.

ITS GOALS ARE:

1. To increase awareness and knowledge among literacy practitioners about the relationship between low levels of literacy and the following: institutionalized racism, inter-generational poverty, learning disabilities, and language and cultural acquisition problems (Vehicles: publications, web page, listserv, conference presentations).
2. To develop research-based training modules and conduct professional development activities for literacy providers on the above topics; and
3. To provide technical assistance and follow-up support to literacy programs that attempt to effect changes to make their services more responsive to the needs of the low-achieving learner.

Contact: **Mary Ann Corely**, Ph.D., Director, NCLSJ, 720 Rural Street, River Ridge, Louisiana 70123, Tel: 504.738.1093, Fax: 504.738.9444, E-mail: macorely1@earthlink.net

MCL Federal Literacy Facts

The Movement for Canadian Literacy is putting out a regular bulletin on literacy-related developments at the national level stemming from the Learning and Skills Initiative announced in the January Speech from the Throne. They are recommending that the government take an inclusive approach recognizing literacy as an element of social cohesion in addition to its importance as a labour market requirement. MCL is keeping the lines of communication open for input from everyone connected to literacy in Canada. To follow unfolding developments, visit the MCL web site at **www.literacy.ca** and send in comments and responses.

Visit www.literacy.ca

Canadian Literacy Thesaurus
Thésaurus canadien d'alphabétisation

ON-LINE

The Canadian Literacy Thesaurus/ Thésaurus canadien d'alphabétisation, first published in 1992 by the **Canadian Literacy Thesaurus Coalition** is now available on the Web. This will make it more accessible to individuals and organizations in Canada and beyond. The on-line Thesaurus is easier to use and update, and encourages user feedback and suggestions for new terms.

The Thesaurus is a list of subject terms in English and French relating to the field of adult literacy. Developed in consultation with the Canadian literacy community, it reflects the diverse regional literacy practices across Canada.

With the extensive production of literacy resources across Canada in the past decade, it has become necessary to organize them in a useful way. The Thesaurus can be used to index print, audio-visual or electronic documents and to organize reading lists and bibliographies. It is also helpful to people who wish to familiarize themselves with terminology or emerging concepts in the Canadian literacy field.

With a grant from the National Literacy Secretariat, the Web project was developed by the Centre AlphaPlus Centre in Toronto, the Centre FORA (Centre franco-ontarien de ressources en alphabétisation) in Sudbury, the Centre de documentation sur l'éducation des adultes et la condition féminine in Montreal, and the National Library of Canada..

Information: **Canadian Literacy Thesaurus Coalition**, 2040 Yonge Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto ON M4S 1Z9
Telephone: (416) 322-1012 ext. 129 or 1 800 788-1120
Fax: (416) 322-0780 or 1 800 788-1912
Web: **www.thesaurusalpha.org**

Canadian Book Summit Explores Future of Reading

June 22 – 25, 2001
Toronto, ON

Dr. Emilia Ferreiro will give a keynote address on June 22 on reading and writing in a changing world. Following Dr. Ferreiro, a panel of celebrities will examine the interplay of reading, the entertainment world, and technological innovation, and several book industry representatives will review Canada's writing, editing, publishing, lending, and book-selling communities.

"Reading: The Competitive Edge" will be held in conjunction with BookExpo Canada under the auspices of the Book and Periodical Council. It is sponsored in part by the Canadian Library Association. BookExpo is sponsored by the Canadian Booksellers Association.

Information:
http://www.reedexpo.ca/bookexpo/conf_friday.htm#5

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec
In collaboration with The Learning
Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)

SUMMER INSTITUTE 2001

Today and tomorrow

June 28 - 30, 2001

Why is there disagreement about the numbers of adult literacy learners who may be learning disabled? Estimates vary from 20% to 80%. What definitions of LD are being used, and is there empirical evidence to support the claims? What impact does technology have on the learning disabled? How would the answers to these questions affect the design of literacy/ABE programs or the level of funding?

Join a group of Canadian, British and American participants including experts from key agencies to delve into these and other questions.

Annotated Bibliography: Learning Disabilities, Literacy and Technology

We will publish an annotated bibliography for the Institute. A draft copy will be included in the participant's binder, and a final document will be available in September 2001. Check our web site for updates.

Registration information:

Tel: 514-931-8731, ext. 1415
Fax: 514-931-5181
E-mail: literacycntr@dawsoncollege.qc.ca
Web site: www.nald.ca/litcent.htm

Literacy Across the CurriculuMedia Focus is published twice a year. Between publications, original material is published on our Website.
To subscribe, complete this form and mail it with your cheque to:

The Centre will be closed for two weeks from July 23 to August 6. Please check our web site for Summer hours.

The Centre for Literacy,
3040 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3Z 1A4

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